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ABSTRACT

This mini-unit seeks to go beyond the acrimonious and divisive debate that has generally characterized the Arab-Israeli conflict and to provide high school students with five distinct options that allow them to explore a range of alternatives for U.S. policy toward the conflict and that provide them with a context for integrating and analysing newly acquired information. The guide offers students four sections of relevant, applicable background materials to consider and integrate as they explore the five policy positions. The unit includes 10-day and 5-day lesson plans. Both plans follow a similar sequence, first introducing the historical background of the conflict and presenting Arab and Israeli perspectives, then engaging students in a role play of U.S. options, and finally guiding them toward the development of their own ideas about U.S. policy. (DB)

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CHOICES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Looking For A Lasting Peace

SO 022 306

ALTERNATIVES FOR PUBLIC DEBATE AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

A project of the Center for Foreign Policy Development

Brown University, Box 1948, Providence, RI 02912

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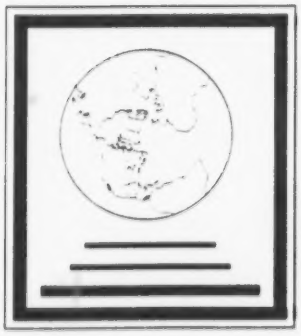

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THE CENTER FOR FOREIGN POLICY DEVELOPMENT of the Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies at Brown University is a nonprofit research organization. Its mandate is to bring together scholars, policymakers, and the public in a search for policy choices that can lead to a consensus on U.S. national security and foreign policy.

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We also thank Joe Walsh for his contribution to earlier drafts of this unit.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Looking for a Lasting Peace is part of a continuing series on current foreign policy issues. A new unit is published every three months during the academic year. We are grateful to The Pew Charitable Trusts, for without their financial support the series would not have come to fruition.

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Note to Teachers

Teaching about the Arab-Israeli conflict presents educators with a number of difficulties. Until recently, intransigence on both sides of the dispute left little hope for conciliation. Debate on the subject in the international arena has generally been acrimonious and divisive. Moreover, historical background on the conflict is not only demanding and complex, but is often muddled by contradictory interpretations.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Looking for a Lasting Peace attempts to resolve these problems for the classroom teacher. This mini-unit seeks to go beyond the two-dimensional debate that has traditionally shaped discussion of the Arab-Israel conflict. Rather, the core of this mini-unit revolves around five distinct options that allow students to explore a range of alternatives for U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. The framework of options also provides students with a context for integrating and analyzing newly acquired information. The background reading is likewise designed with the high school student in mind. The four sections offer students accessible portions of relevant, applicable material. As the table of contents indicates, both the background readings and the options are part of the student text.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Looking for a Lasting Peace includes a ten-day and a five-day lesson plan. Both plans follow a similar sequence, first introducing the historical background of the conflict and presenting Arab and Israeli perspectives, then engaging students in a role play of U.S. options, and finally guiding them toward the development of their own ideas about U.S. policy. The full-length background readings are intended for use with the ten-day lesson plan, while an abridged version of the readings is available for the five-day plan.

Recent international events -- the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Gulf War, and the opening of Arab-Israeli peace talks -- have afforded new opportunities to take a fresh look at the Arab-Israeli conflict in the classroom. We hope you find this unit a useful tool for examining this complex and captivating subject. Below is an outline of the Ten-Day Lesson Plan. (See page 45 for the Five-Day Lesson Plan.)

Day One: Introducing the Arab-Israeli conflict: preparation
Homework: Read Introduction of the student text

Day Two: Introducing the Arab-Israeli conflict: presentation
Homework: Read Part I of the student text and complete "Study Guide -- Part I"

Day Three: Mapping the Arab-Israeli conflict
Homework: Read Part II of the student text and complete "Study Guide -- Part II"

Day Four: Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict from a Middle Eastern perspective: preparation

Day Five: Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict from a Middle Eastern perspective: presentation
Homework: Read Part III of the student text and complete "Study Guide -- Part III"

Day Six: Advocating the five options: organization and preparation
Homework: Complete preparations for the simulation

Day Seven: Advocating the five options: presentation
Homework: Complete preparations for cross-examination questions

Day Eight: Advocating the five options: cross-examination
Homework: Read each of the five options and complete "Focusing Your Thoughts"

Day Nine: Crafting student options

Day Ten: Expressing your views

Our material is periodically updated.

For more information, please contact

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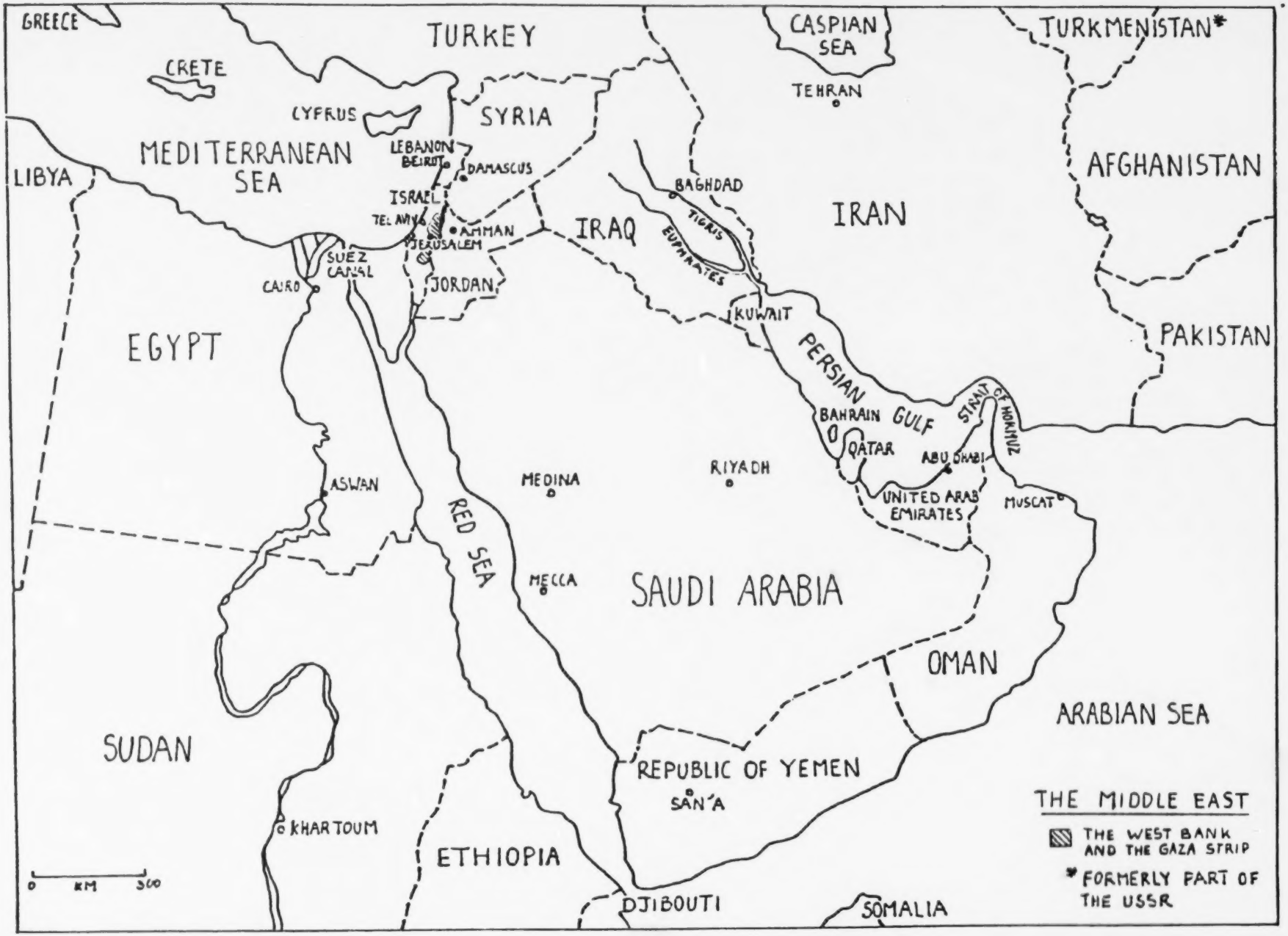
Data Compiled from: Carter, Jimmy The Blood of Abraham Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1985, map 1.



Introduction

The Arab-Israeli conflict centers on a small piece of land in the Middle East no larger than the state of New Jersey. This area, which stretches from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, is referred to either by its Latin name of Palestine, or the Hebrew name of Eretz Israel.[1] Both Arabs and Jews have religious ties to this land and therefore an understanding of these ties is important to comprehend the modern conflict. However, the current conflict is not primarily a religious battle, but a political battle over competing national aspirations. In other words, it is a fight over who will control Palestine and who will call it their home.

Religious ties to the land of Palestine

Three of the world's great religions -- Judaism, Christianity and Islam -- developed in the Middle East. Each of these religions is monotheistic, which means that its followers believe in only one god. Believers in all three religions claim descent from the Hebrew patriarch Abraham and all have special ties to Palestine.

Jewish ties to the land: According to Jewish sacred writings, Palestine was promised to the Jewish people by God in a covenant with Abraham and later with Moses. Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son to prove his obedience to God. The attempted sacrifice is believed to have taken place on Mount Zion, in Jerusalem, the site on which the first and second Jewish Temples were later built.

A dynasty of Jewish kings ruled parts of Palestine in ancient times, but its reign was repeatedly interrupted by invasion from other powers. The kingdom was conquered by the Babylonians in the 6th century B.C., and its people were held captive in Babylon for many years. Nevertheless, many Jews eventually returned to Palestine, and rebuilt their homes and their Temple. The Jewish nation continued to inhabit the region, even after the Romans took control in 63 B.C. But after a series of revolts, the Roman emperor expelled many Jews from Palestine, and they were dispersed throughout the empire. The Jews who were forced to live outside of Palestine came to be called Diaspora Jews, or "those in dispersion." They eventually made their homes throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Over thousands of years of Jewish history, periods of acceptance and prosperity alternated with catastrophic waves of persecution, massacre and flight. Under the impact of these upheavals, some Jews forgot their past and were assimilated into other cultures. Many others responded in the opposite way -- by strengthening their commitment to Jewish tradition and looking forward to the day when God would send a savior to lead the Jews back to Zion. Their religious and secular lives became so tied together that a communal identity has survived to the present.

Christian ties to the land: Palestine is the "Holy Land" to the world's Christians because it is the birthplace of Jesus, a Jew, and the setting for the story of his life and lessons as recounted in the New Testament of the Bible. Many Arabs today are Christians and trace their religious origin to the early followers of Christ.

Muslim ties to the land: Muslims believe that God revealed his truths through a series of prophets: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesus, and finally Muhammad, who is the last of the prophets. For Muslims, therefore, some of the scriptural heritage of the Jews and the Christians is their heritage as well. However, they are guided by their own holy scripture, the Koran, which is the word of God as revealed to Muhammad. The Dome of the Rock, the golden domed structure in the Jerusalem skyline, was built over a rock which, according to tradition, marked the site of Abraham's attempted sacrifice. It is also believed to be the place where Muhammad touched earth during a miraculous nocturnal journey to heaven. Muslims consider Jerusalem their third holiest city and, therefore, an important pilgrimage site.

Religious beliefs still carry great weight in today's secular and political life in the Middle East, making it difficult for some who value these ties to compromise over their claims to the land. Religious ties, however,

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1. Palestine literally means "land of the Philistines" in Latin, the name given by the Roman Empire. "Eretz Israel" is Hebrew for "land of Israel." This unit will use the name Palestine, the name most historians use, when referring to the area before 1948.

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are not the driving factor in the conflict today. The conflict is over land. For Palestinian Arabs, including both Christians and Muslims, their ties are based on the fact that for centuries Palestine has been their home. For Jews, the compelling interest has been to establish a homeland, safe from persecution, in the land of their ancestors. The rise of nationalism in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the repercussions it had on both Jews and Arabs, marked the beginning of the present dispute.

The rise of nationalism: the beginning of the current Arab-Israeli conflict

Until about a hundred years ago, multinational empires were a common form of government in many parts of the world. For instance, the Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire ruled large parts of Europe, while the Ottoman Turkish Empire ruled the Middle East, as well as part of Europe. Each empire ruled people of many "nations," or peoples of common descent, religion, language and culture. People throughout an empire were generally loyal to their emperor, even if he came from a different nation.

In the 19th century, however, this attitude changed. According to the idea of modern nationalism that arose in Europe and then spread elsewhere, people should not submit to "foreign" rulers. They should fight to free themselves from multinational empires and create a national state of their own.

At the turn of the century, neither Jews nor Palestinian Arabs had a state of their own. Since 1517, Palestine, which was populated mostly by Arabs, had been ruled by the Ottoman Empire. Diaspora Jews had scattered around the world but had largely never integrated into the societies in which they lived. A resurgence of anti-semitism in the 19th century, combined with successful examples of nationalism, inspired many Jews to believe in the possibility of creating their own state. At the turn of the century, Theodore Herzl, a European Jew, founded the World Zionist Organization, which promoted the establishment of an independent Jewish state. This state would reunite the Jews, protect them from persecution, and establish a government that would serve their needs.

In the beginning, the organization courted various European governments to grant them territory. One location considered was in British East Africa (present-day Kenya and Uganda). However, within a few years a group which insisted for religious reasons upon Palestine came to dominate the Zionist movement. The Zionists petitioned the Ottomans for the creation of an independent state within the Empire, but the Ottomans declined. Refusing to be discouraged, Zionists bought land from local landowners in Palestine, so that Jewish immigrants could settle there.

The World Zionist Organization was instrumental in turning the Jewish dream of a nation into a reality. It created a financial and organizational network that actively pursued this end, and that could take charge once a nation was created. Because of this, the Jews were better prepared than the Palestinian Arabs to build their own state.

Although nationalism at this time was largely a European development, British and French links to the Middle East brought an awareness of this movement to the Arab world. Arab nationalism began to emerge at the end of the 19th century. At first, this was an intellectual movement that promoted the resurgence of a common Arab culture and language. Only later, as Arab nationalism started to win popular support and as the Ottoman hold on the region weakened, did the prospect emerge of creating one or more independent Arab states. The Arab nationalists worked to hasten the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and hoped that they would then be able to rule themselves.

As the 19th century came to a close, the movement to establish a Jewish national home in the Middle East increased in popularity among European Jews. As Jewish immigration increased, Arab opposition developed. Even though there were only 85,000 Jews in Palestine in 1914 -- compared to about 550,000 Arabs -- many Arabs felt threatened by the immigration of Jews to Palestine and the increasing international support that they were receiving.

The role of European powers in Palestine

Arabs and Jews were not the only ones with a stake in the future of the region. During the 19th century, Great Britain and France (as well as Russia) had taken advantage of the Ottoman Empire's weakness to establish their influence in the region. Great Britain was especially involved, since it controlled the Suez Canal in Egypt, which gave it easy access to its empire in the Indian subcontinent.

When World War I erupted, the Ottoman Empire threatened British and French interests in the region by siding with the enemy, Germany. Britain decided to take active steps to protect its sphere of influence and entered into three separate negotiations. The present Arab-Israeli conflict stems, in part, from these conflicting plans:

- The British promised the Arabs independence after the war if they staged a revolt against the Turks. With the help of the now legendary British officer T. E. Lawrence, or Lawrence of Arabia, Arab armies rose against the Turks, capturing several garrisons and harassing Turkish forces.

- The British also signed a secret agreement with France dividing control of the region between the two countries. The British retained influence over the areas in which they had the greatest interest, Iraq and Transjordan (present-day Jordan). According to this pact, the area of Palestine was to be under international administration.

- In the "Balfour Declaration," a letter written by British foreign minister Arthur Balfour, the British promised the Zionists "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people...it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine."

The British hoped these agreements would strengthen their position in the region. However, the end of the war and the collapse of Turkish influence in the area led to much conflict as the three contradictory promises were made public. Arabs and Jews both looked to the British to keep to their word.

In an effort to resolve the situation, in the early 1920s, the League of Nations set up a system of "mandates," whereby lands taken from the Ottoman Empire were put under the administrative control of France and Great Britain. France was given control of Syria and Lebanon. Britain was given a mandate for Iraq and a mandate for Palestine and Transjordan as well.

Part I: The Middle East, 1920 to 1985

By 1920, there were already several changes under way in the region that ended the possibility of peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Jews in Palestine.

The British partitioned the land of the Mandate of Palestine ("greater Palestine," including Palestine and Transjordan) almost as soon as they were granted control. The area east of the Jordan River, Transjordan, was given to the Hashemites, an Arab royal family from Mecca that had helped Britain in the war. Transjordan began the process of becoming an independent state, and eventually named itself Jordan. Jewish migration east of the Jordan River was barred after Transjordan was created. This partition left the British with only the land west of the Jordan River, Palestine, to administer directly after 1921.

The British were supposed to fulfill in Palestine the promises they had made to both the Jews and the Arabs during World War I. The League of Nations required Britain to honor the Balfour Declaration in the Mandate of Palestine. The British were to promote the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" without infringing on the rights of the local Arab population.

Zionists and Arab nationalists interpreted this differently. The Zionists believed the Balfour Declaration promised the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. In order for this to be achieved quickly, the immigration of Jews had to be encouraged so that the future state could be populated by Jews. Arab nationalists, on the other hand, believed that they would be granted independence and wanted restrictions on Jewish immigration in order to protect their majority.

The steady increase in the immigration of Jews in the 1920s fueled tensions which resulted in violent encounters between Zionists and Arab nationalists. In response to these violent outbreaks, the Zionist settlers organized the Haganah, a local defense force that grew during the 1920s.

When Adolf Hitler took power in Germany in 1933, the immigration rate of Jews to Palestine shot up, leading to even more tension between Arabs and Jews. The Arab leadership in Palestine did not believe that the British were doing enough to slow down Jewish immigration. In 1936, Arabs launched a general strike in protest of British policy. They also boycotted Jewish goods and began attacks against Jews and Jewish settlements, as well as British forces. This strike was the beginning of three years of intense violence that came to be know as the Arab Revolt.

The Arab Revolt convinced the British government that the national aspirations of the two groups were irreconcilable within a unified state of Palestine. In 1937, they suggested a partition of Palestine, dividing it into separate Arab and Jewish zones (see map 1). Both Arabs and Jews were opposed to the partition, because both claimed the right to the whole of Palestine. But the Zionist leadership decided that a guarantee to part of Palestine was better than nothing. Even the Zionists who did not want to compromise accepted the partition as the only way to establish a Jewish state quickly. Arab leaders, on the other hand, vowed to fight the partition all the way. The Arabs were the majority in Palestine and did not want it divided. They regarded the Jews as new settlers, whereas Palestine was their home and the home of their fathers and forefathers.

The partition plan led to a much more violent stage of the Arab Revolt in 1937. When the revolt ended, in 1939, 69 British soldiers, 500 Jews and more than 3,000 Arabs had been killed. Arab nationalists had attacked not just Jews and British officials, but also Arabs who cooperated with the British. As the violence grew, the Haganah worked cooperatively with the British military. More extreme Zionist groups, like Stern Gang and Irgun, also developed during this time and carried out attacks against Arabs. The revolt ended when the Arab leadership collapsed. By that time, World War II had broken out in Europe, preventing the British from giving further consideration to the partition plan.

World War II dramatically changed the situation in the Middle East. As the war began, the British government adopted a pro-Arab stance. In order to line up Arab support in the effort against Hitler, the British restricted Jewish immigration. But as the war ended, many countries began to look favorably on the Jewish position. This support was in large part a response to the Holocaust during World War II, when more than six million European Jews were murdered under the Nazi regime.

The Holocaust confirmed to many Jews what the earliest Zionists had argued: that Jews were not safe unless they had a state of their own. Many of the Jews who survived Nazi occupation or concentration camps

left Europe after the war. Large numbers of Jews emigrated to the United States, but Jewish support for Zionism had greatly increased, and hundreds of thousands of Jews emigrated to Palestine. In 1917, Jews in Palestine were 8 percent of the population, but after World War II, the number swelled to 600,000, or 30 percent of the population. The Arab population at this time was approximately 1,256,000.

The restriction in immigration at the outbreak of the war convinced the Zionists that the British had abandoned their responsibilities under the League of Nations Mandate and were instead more interested in their relations with the Arabs. Zionist Jews were in Palestine in much larger numbers now, and the local governments and defense forces they had assembled since the 1920s were very well organized. They demanded that the British leave Palestine. Some Zionist guerrilla groups carried out attacks against the British to force them to leave.

In 1947, facing opposition from both the Arab nationalists and the Zionists, the British decided to pull out of Palestine within a year. The League of Nations was no longer in existence, so the British decided to turn responsibility for Palestine over to the newly formed United Nations (UN), officially ending the Mandate at midnight, May 14, 1948.

The United Nations, the creation of Israel, and the first Arab-Israeli war

The United Nations came to the same conclusion that the British had come to before World War II: that Palestine would have to be divided. The UN proposed a new partition plan, dividing the region into two unequal states, one Jewish and one Arab (see map 2). One city in the Jewish zone was to be under Arab rule. Meanwhile, Jerusalem, which fell within the proposed Arab zone, was to become an international city, under the supervision of the UN. Zionists accepted the UN partition plan for the same reason that they had accepted the 1937 British partition plan. The Arabs, as in 1937, did not.

Knowing the British would pull their troops out the day the partition went into effect, Zionists began to take control of the territory allotted to them by the UN, including many predominantly Arab towns that had been included in the Jewish zone. As the date of the British departure approached, violence erupted as each side fought to extend its area of control. This outbreak of violence was intense, and there were terrorist acts on both sides. Many Arabs fled in panic. It is estimated that more than half a million, or approximately 70 percent of the Arabs who lived in the Jewish area, left for the Arab zone or other Arab countries.

When the British left in May 1948, the Zionists declared that the part of Palestine given them by the United Nations was the independent state of Israel. The United States and the Soviet Union immediately granted diplomatic recognition to the new state. The Arab states, however, refused to recognize Israel. For some time, Palestinian Arabs had been supported in their fight by men and arms from neighboring Arab countries, but the day after it declared itself an independent state, Israel was invaded by forces from Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq.

The 1948 war ended with a UN-negotiated cease fire a few months later. Israel had held off the Arab attack and expanded its territory to include a part of the Arab zone of the UN partition. The rest of the Arab zone was divided between Jordan, which held the land on the western bank of the Jordan River (present-day West Bank), and Egypt, which held the Gaza Strip (see map 3). Jerusalem became a divided city, with the western half under Israel's control and the eastern half under Jordan's control. These cease fire lines served as the de facto boundaries of the states in the region, but were not official borders. The Arab states refused to formally recognize Israel's existence, or negotiate directly with it. The end of the war also saw the creation of a huge refugee problem, as Palestinian Arabs who had fled from Israel were not allowed back to their homes. Jewish settlers moved into the region and filled their places. Those Palestinians who remained in Israel were denied full citizenship.

The creation of the state of Israel was the crowning achievement of the Zionist movement. By gaining their own state, Jews felt they could better protect themselves against hostility and persecution in the future. However, the fulfillment of Jewish nationalism set back the hopes of Palestinian Arabs for their own state. Palestinians felt the land was rightfully theirs, and would not accept the creation of a state of Israel. Further, neighboring Arab countries were willing to back up Palestinian claims with military aid. The Israelis resolved to fight rather than lose their new homeland. Thus the stage was set for increased conflict over the next four decades.

The early years of Israel: conflict in the region

During the 1950s there were three major developments. The first was the rise of Pan-Arabism, a movement led by Egyptian leader Gamal Abd al-Nasser, which called for greater Arab unity and rejected the interference of Western powers in the affairs of the region. Opposition to Israel became one of the rallying points in the effort to promote Pan-Arabism.

The second was the end of British and French preeminence in the Middle East. In 1956, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, ending 81 years of British control, and declared it Egyptian property. The British and French launched a military operation to retake the canal. This operation, with the help of Israel, succeeded militarily but not politically. The United States and the Soviet Union condemned the operation and demanded that all three armies withdraw from Egypt. They all withdrew and UN peacekeeping forces were positioned along the Israeli-Egyptian border to prevent further aggression. The Suez Crisis demonstrated the decline of French and British colonial influence in the region.

The third development was a change in the U.S. attitude toward the Middle East. The United States was instrumental in establishing the state of Israel, but otherwise had not been involved in Middle Eastern affairs. During the 1950s, however, the Cold War intensified and Washington saw the Middle East as a battleground in the global fight to contain communism. Furthermore, the U.S. and its allies increasingly depended on Middle Eastern oil, adding a new dimension to U.S. interests in the region. After 1957, the U.S. provided economic and military aid to any state in the region that would vow to oppose communism and help guarantee foreign access to oil. Egypt was an early recipient of U.S. aid, which was later cut off when Nasser officially recognized communist China. Israel, Saudi Arabia and Iran all received a great deal of U.S. support.

In the Middle East itself, there was a major change by the mid-1960s. The Arabs who had been displaced by the 1948 war demanded that they be allowed to return to their homeland, and that Palestine become an Arab state. The Arab League, an association of a number of Arab countries founded in 1945, decided at a meeting in 1964 to create the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The PLO's goal was "liberating Palestine" and recapturing its "usurped homeland in its entirety." At about the same time, the Soviet Union became a primary supplier of arms to the Arabs, particularly Egypt, Iraq and Syria, all opponents of Israel.

The Six-Day War of 1967: a turning point

In 1967, the Arab states and Israel fought again. This war, called the "Six-Day War," was a major turning point in the conflict and changed the political map of the region. The Israelis gained territories they deemed vital to their security, and Palestinians living there came under Israeli military rule.

In 1967, Arab states prepared for war and made threats against Israel, but refrained from direct military attack. Egypt cut off the Gulf of Aqaba to Israel's ships. Nasser also demanded that the UN remove a peacekeeping force in the Sinai Peninsula, which had been acting as a buffer between Egypt and Israel since the Suez Crisis.

The Israeli government considered these moves acts of war. The Israelis also decided that they could win a swift victory if they undertook a surprise attack. As a result, Israel launched a strike against its Arab neighbors. Within a few hours, Israel had destroyed much of the air forces of Egypt, Jordan and Syria, and within six days captured the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and Golan Heights -- all of which had been used by the Arab states to launch attacks into Israel (see map 4). Israel also captured East Jerusalem, which had been under Jordan's control since the 1948 war, and reunited the city under Israeli control. The West Bank and Gaza Strip became known as the occupied territories, and Palestinians living there came under military rule, a state of affairs that continues today.

U.S. President Lyndon Johnson thought Israel should hold onto the territory it captured until the Arab states were willing to make peace with Israel. Johnson continued U.S. support of Israel and increased U.S. involvement, making the U.S. the largest supplier of military equipment to Israel. For the next two decades, every U.S. president supported Israel, and refused to pressure it to return the captured territories until Israel's neighbors formally recognized it.

After the 1967 Six-Day War, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 242, which called on the Arabs to stop all threats and acts of force against Israel, and for "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent con-

flict." This is the origin of the now familiar formula of trading "land for peace" to settle the conflict. The Middle Eastern states did not, however, implement this resolution, because neither side could agree on its exact meaning.

An additional result of the 1967 war was the emergence of the PLO as a major participant in Middle Eastern politics, as it separated itself from the control of the Arab League and became an independent advocate of Palestinian issues. The PLO is composed of several organizations, ranging from political bodies to guerrilla groups. After the Six-Day War, one guerrilla group, al-Fatah, took control of the PLO, and Yasser Arafat, who headed al-Fatah, became its chairman.

Changes in the 1970s

The 1970s was a decade of extremes in the Middle East. Violence and war marked the beginning of the decade, but, by the end, the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab nation was signed.

Armed guerrilla attacks became a tool used to draw attention to the plight of the Palestinians. There were several Arab attacks against Israeli civilians in the 1970s. Perhaps the best-known incident was at the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich, Germany, where eleven Israeli athletes were taken hostage by a group of Arab radicals. The athletes were killed during a rescue attempt. Israel also launched several attacks. This marked the beginning of a spiral of aggression and counter-aggression. In Israel, these acts of violence created increasing support for the policies of the hard-line political parties.

In 1973, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel on Yom Kippur, a Jewish holy day, in an effort to retake the Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights. The effort ultimately failed, but fighting was fierce and at first the Arab armies had the upper hand. During the first few days of the war, Israel thought that it might lose; some observers in the U.S. now believe that Israel considered using nuclear weapons.

Just as the Soviet Union rapidly resupplied Syria and Egypt during the war, the United States sent large shipments of arms to Israel. This prompted the Arab states to impose an oil embargo against the U.S. The embargo had a crippling effect on the United States, forcing oil prices to quadruple and causing long lines at gas stations. In recognition of the impact of the oil embargo, U.S. presidents since 1973 have stated that the Middle Eastern oil supply is of vital national interest, and the United States has vowed to use military means to protect that interest.

The 1973 war gave diplomacy a fresh chance. The Arab states had been embarrassed by their defeat in the 1967 war. Although they lost in 1973, the Arab armies fought more effectively than in 1967 and were initially able to break through the Israeli defense lines. Following this, Anwar Sadat, the new leader of Egypt, pursued peace talks with the Israelis. It also convinced the U.S. government that, although it still supported Israel, the United States had to try to find a negotiated settlement.

The UN issued a new resolution in 1973, which called for peace in the region. UN Resolution 338 essentially called for all sides to follow through on the largely ignored UN Resolution 242.

The United States became involved in the negotiating process when Secretary of State Henry Kissinger began what is known as "shuttle diplomacy," flying between the capital cities of the Middle East to establish a cease fire between the different parties. After many months, Kissinger was successful in arranging a cease fire through disengagement agreements.

Kissinger continued diplomatic efforts, which resulted in an easing of tensions between Israel and Egypt. But several events made further diplomacy difficult. In the U.S., most Americans were more interested in the new detente with the Soviet Union and the resignation of President Richard Nixon than with peace in the Middle East. At the same time in the Middle East, there was a new hard-line attitude in the Arab world, which came about in reaction to Sadat's willingness to negotiate with Israel. Many Arab states, including Syria and Iraq, as well as the PLO, formed the Rejectionist Front and opposed further diplomatic efforts. Consequently, Kissinger's diplomatic efforts effectively ended in 1975.

In 1977, Sadat took a dramatic step to move the stalled peace effort forward. He traveled to Jerusalem and addressed the Knesset, Israel's parliament. His speech, which was a direct appeal to end the conflict made in the capital city of the enemy, was the first and only speech of its kind in the Middle East. It broke the log jam, and spurred the effort toward peace in the Middle East.

But this peace effort did not move very far at first. Earlier that same year, Israel had elected a right-wing national government, led by the Likud party of Menachem Begin, which ran on a platform of never trading land for peace. The Begin government launched a controversial policy of building Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. Both of these stances made it difficult to imagine a solution that both sides would accept.

New hopes for peace seemed to be dying until U.S. President Jimmy Carter stepped in to mediate in 1978. Carter brought Sadat and Begin to the presidential retreat, Camp David. They persevered until a solution was worked out and signed.

With Carter as the mediator, Sadat and Begin negotiated an Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement known as the Camp David accords. The accords, which were signed in Washington in September 1978, had two separate "frameworks for peace." The first dealt exclusively with Egypt and Israel. It called on Israel to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in exchange for the demilitarization of most of the peninsula and Egypt's recognition of Israel. The second part dealt with the Palestinian question. It outlined several steps that would lead to increased Palestinian autonomy. For signing these accords, Sadat and Begin won the 1978 Nobel Peace Prize.

The Egyptian-Israeli treaty was meant to be used as a framework for further discussions between Israel and the other Arab states. It was also hoped that the Camp David accords could be the basis for a solution to the Palestinian issue. Neither hope was realized. The Arab world denounced the treaty, and condemned Egypt for signing it. All but two Arab states cut off diplomatic relations with Egypt, voted to remove it from the Arab League, and imposed an economic boycott on Egypt.

The Camp David accords also revived the debate over UN Resolution 242. The Arab states argued that the resolution demanded the return of all the territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 war. The Israelis, on the other hand, pointed out that the resolution did not say "all" territories, or even "the" territories -- just "withdraw from territories." By giving back the Sinai Peninsula, conservative Israelis argued that they had met the letter of the law by withdrawing from some territories. Begin's government was committed to not trading any other territories. Israel considered most of the remaining territories part of the biblical land of Israel, and considered all the territories essential for Israel's security.

The 1980s: war and conciliation

The 1980s began turbulently. In 1981, Sadat was assassinated by religious fundamentalists in Egypt. Earlier that year, Israel bombed Iraq's main nuclear weapons facility program at Osirak. In June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon for the second time since 1978. Unlike the 1978 invasion, which was limited to southern Lebanon, Israel's 1982 campaign took them all the way to Beirut.

Israeli officials explained that the invasion of Lebanon was carried out to stop PLO guerrillas from crossing the border, but it was also an effort to drive the PLO's military and political headquarters out of Lebanon entirely, to diminish the appeal of the PLO to Palestinians inside Israeli-controlled territory, and to create a pro-Israeli government in Lebanon. The Israelis managed to drive the 12,000 PLO fighters out of Lebanon, but at high cost in human life to both sides.

There were also great political costs. The invasion caused a shift in Israeli politics. Many Israelis opposed the war, and supported a movement called Peace Now, which was created at the beginning of the Camp David negotiations. Peace Now and other peace groups in Israel wanted to end the Lebanese conflict and the occupation of the territories. This opposition grew as the death toll mounted. At one point, Palestinians living in refugee camps in West Beirut were massacred by a Lebanese Christian militia which had cooperated with Israel during the war, while the Israeli military was supposed to be protecting the camps.

The divisions among the Israeli people over the invasion of Lebanon became clear during the next election for prime minister. In 1984, the ruling Likud party lost a great deal of support and could not win a majority. The election was a virtual tie, with the country divided between the right-wing Likud party and the more moderate Labor party. Since neither side could win the election decisively, the two rival parties were forced to share power. The result was an uneasy partnership and an agreement to rotate the office of prime minister.

Meanwhile, the political mood had also shifted in the United States. President Ronald Reagan was voted into office in 1980. He reiterated Israel's importance as a strategic asset in the Cold War and, after Israel's invasion of Lebanon, clarified U.S. foreign policy con-

cerning Israel. Reagan called for the trading of land for peace, but maintained opposition to the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

Multinational peacekeeping troops, which included U.S. marines, were sent to Lebanon in 1982. While stationed in Beirut, the marines became embroiled in the civil war that had been raging in earnest since 1975.

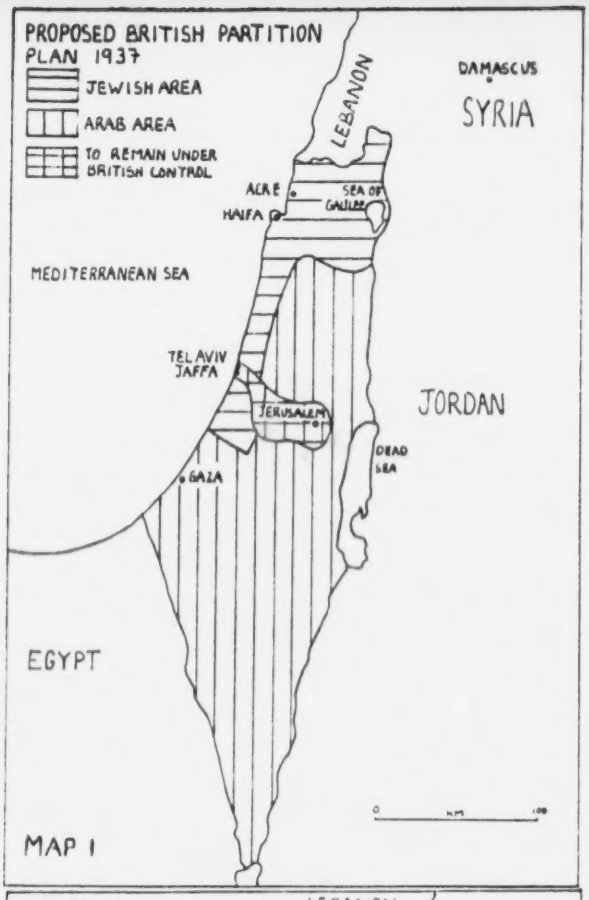
The Lebanese civil war was a complex affair. It was a struggle between Christian and Muslim communities, each splintered into smaller, armed militia factions, all vying for the control of Lebanon. The U.S., with little knowledge of the different factions, thought it could help establish a stable government by helping one of the factions, the Maronites, which was the dominant Christian faction. U.S. marines soon became the target of mostly Muslim enemy fire. U.S. marines and naval forces retaliated by bombarding villages reported to be weapons sites. This resulted in further hostilities as religious fundamentalists began a wave of guerrilla attacks, including kidnapping Americans in Beirut and assassinating the U.S. ambassador to Lebanon. The deadliest attack was a suicide car bomb attack on the marine barracks in Beirut, which killed 241 marines in 1983. Reagan removed all U.S. personnel the next year.

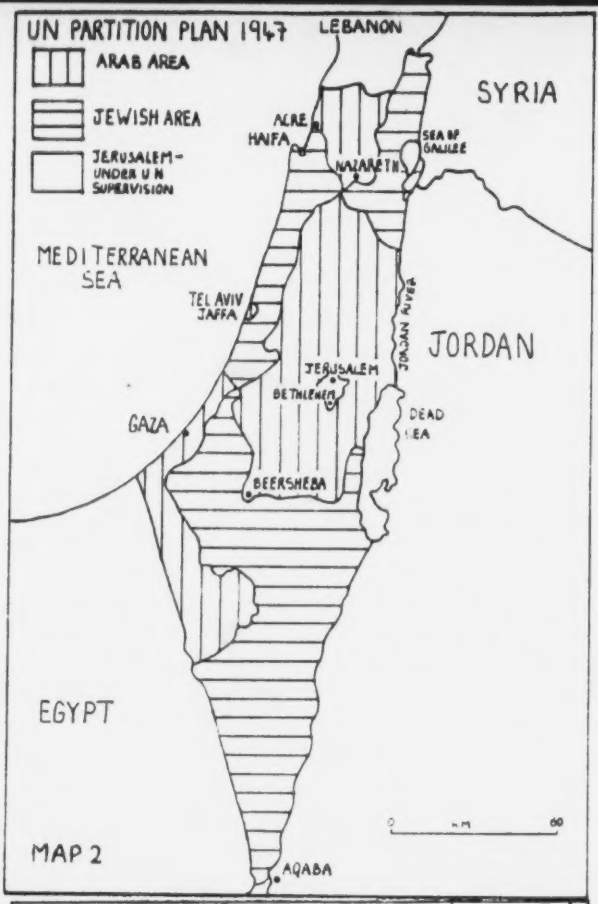
In 1985, when the moderate Labor Party leader Shimon Peres was prime minister, Israel withdrew its troops from all but the last six to ten miles along Lebanon's border, which they named a "security zone" (see map 4). The fifth war in the Middle East in less that 40 years was over, and to many observers, peace seemed as elusive as ever.

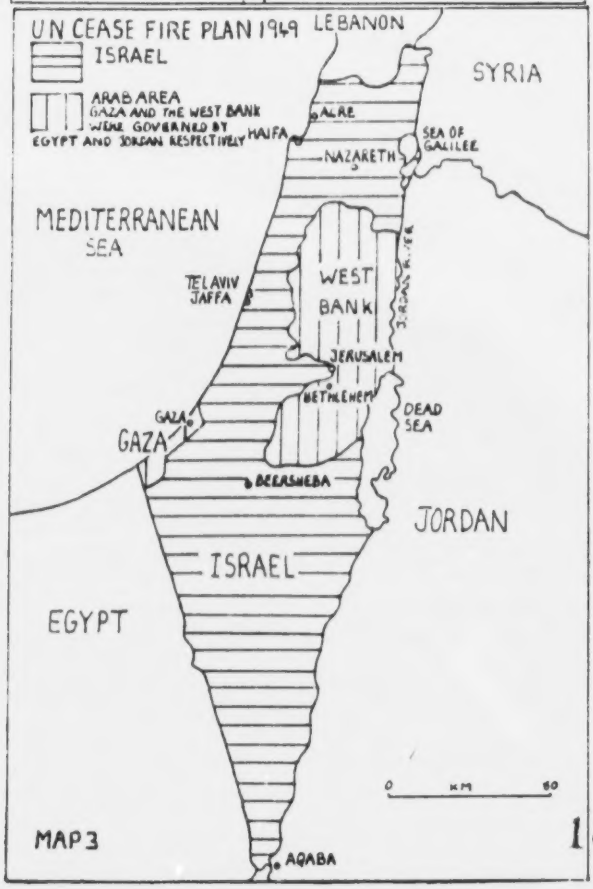
Why does the history matter?

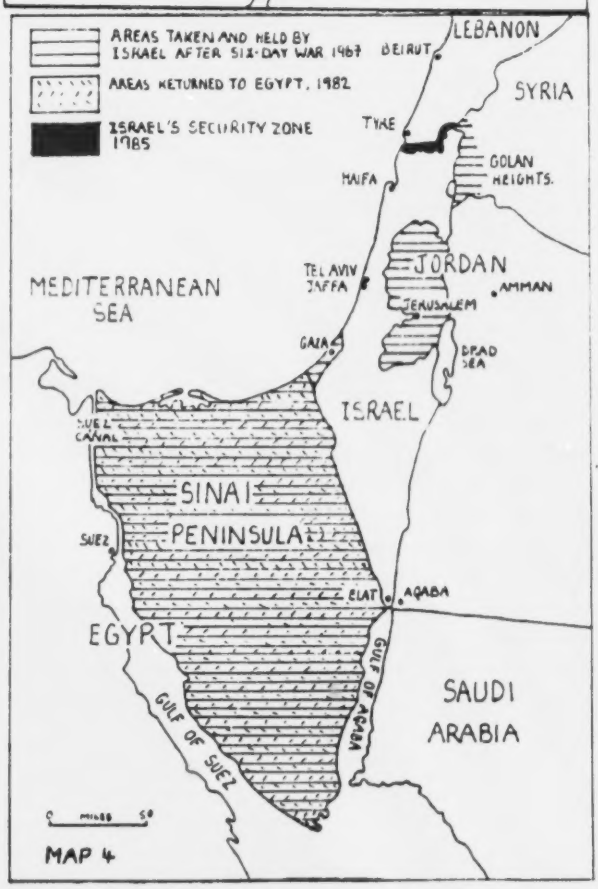
We need to know the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict if we are to understand how today's situation came into being. We also need to know the history if we are to understand the feelings and attitudes of the people involved in the conflict. By keeping in mind the horror of the murder of six million Jews by the Nazis we can more easily understand why Israelis feel so anxious about their security, a feeling which Arab hostility keeps alive. Likewise, by remembering how the Palestinians were expelled from their native land, turned into refugees and at times massacred, we can better appreciate why they feel such anger and resentment against Israel and the Zionist movement.

Can the history of the conflict tell us more than this? Does it help us judge which side is in the right and which side is in the wrong? Does it help us work out the best way to resolve the conflict or the best policy for the U.S. to adopt? Many people think that history can help us find a final solution, while others consider it sensible to put historical claims aside and deal with the situation at hand.









Data compiled from: Smith, Charles. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988; Bickerton, I. and Pearson, M. *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1986; *Carta's Historical Map of Israel*. Jerusalem, 1977.

Part II: 1991, a Crossroads in the Middle East?

The peace talks that began in Madrid on October 30, 1991, were anxiously awaited by the world. Three events occurred in the previous five years that prompted many people to believe that a negotiated peace was necessary and might finally be possible. In 1987, a Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories, called the *intifada*, altered the Western perception of the Palestinians as terrorists and spotlighted the necessity to find a solution to the occupation. More recently, the Gulf War and the collapse of the Soviet Union had a tremendous political and economic impact on the Middle East. However, each delegation participating in the peace talks is driven by its own concerns that will have to be addressed at the negotiating table.

What motivates the people of the Middle East?

Israel

Israel's primary concern has traditionally been security. Because Israel has been surrounded by hostile Arab countries, it did not feel secure in its pre-1967 borders. By occupying the territories of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and later the security zone in southern Lebanon, it created buffer zones between itself and the Arab states on its borders. Although these territories do not prevent a missile attack, they do offer natural geographic boundaries that would impede the advances of an overland army. Furthermore, the territories provide a much needed resource -- water. Many Israelis supported the occupation of the territories in 1967 and the establishment of a security zone in southern Lebanon in 1985. However, today Israelis are divided over which approach will make Israel more secure: trading land for peace or incorporating the occupied territories into the state of Israel.

The Likud party, under the leadership of Yitzhak Shamir, believes that the occupied territories are an essential component in the security of Israel. For this reason, the government has continued to promote the development of settlements in the occupied territories. The rate of this construction has increased in the last few years, especially since the Gulf War. It is estimated that 13,000 houses were under construction in 1991, which is an increase in construction of 65 percent from the previous year. Many more homes are planned for next year. Furthermore, Israel has always sought to provide a home for all Jews who wish to emigrate. Recently, it has been taking in Jews from Russia and Ethiopia. The development of the territories allows more Jewish immigrants to settle in Israel, which may eventually help offset the larger number of Arabs in the area.

Not everyone agrees with this policy. Although trading land for peace would cause Israel to lose the buffers it has worked to create, many argue that it would make Israel more secure in the long run by ending the fighting with the Palestinians. The *intifada*, a widespread uprising of the Palestinian inhabitants of the occupied territories, has heightened Israeli concern about the possible consequences of Israel's actions on future generations. Many Israelis see the holding of the territories and the subjection of the Palestinians to military rule as not only a potential source for war, but also a threat to many of Israel's democratic principles. The majority of the population tends to support the return of some land to attain peace and end military occupation.

On the other hand, some religious fundamentalists believe that Eretz Israel will not be complete until all of the West Bank (biblical Judea and Samaria) is once again fully part of Israel. This position is supported by ultra-nationalists, some of whom held positions in the cabinet on the eve of the Madrid peace conference. They believe that West Bank and Gaza Palestinians should move to Jordan, which they argue is a Palestinian nation. Both of these groups have committed acts of intimidation to pressure Palestinians not to join the peace talks. At the other end of the political spectrum, there is a growing minority that believes the only way to attain peace is to return the territories in full.

The Israeli population is divided over the issue of the territories. While some observers believe that security issues determine the outcome of elections, others say that economic growth decides elections and that the electoral support of the Likud party therefore is not a reflection of the population's feelings toward the territories.

Likud's policy has also affected U.S.-Israeli relations. Many U.S. officials now believe that the Israeli development of the occupied territories threatens the drive for peace. Prior to the Madrid conference, the Shamir

government asked the U.S. to guarantee repayment of a $10 billion loan, if Israel itself could not repay the money it borrowed. Although the U.S. had provided such loan guarantees in the past, President George Bush postponed the decision. Bush feared that the Palestinians would withdraw from the peace talks if he guaranteed the loan, because the money would enable more construction in the occupied territories.

Israel has always said that it would meet any place, any time, but only with "suitable negotiating partners." It barred the PLO from the talks because Israel considers them a terrorist organization, committed to destroying Israel. U.S. secretary of state James Baker spent the summer of 1991 finding suitable partners who meet Israeli demands -- specifically non-PLO Palestinians who would attend the conference as part of the Jordanian delegation. When that was accomplished, the United States put pressure on Israel to attend. It would have been difficult for Israel to say no.

Palestinians

Over 1.5 million Palestinians live in the occupied territories. (It is estimated that roughly two thirds live in their own homes and one third live in refugee camps.) Approximately 600,000 Palestinians have remained in Israel. Another 2.5 to 3 million Palestinians live outside of Israel and the occupied territories, mostly in the Arab world. Almost a half million of these live in refugee camps in neighboring states.

The refugee problem dates back to 1948, when the declaration of the state of Israel and the subsequent war between Israel and its Arab neighbors forced more than half a million Palestinians to leave their homes in Jewish territory. They settled in refugee camps in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria, expecting to return very shortly. The 1967 war displaced another half million Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, a third of whom had originally been displaced from the Jewish area in 1948. Some of the refugees have dispersed into other Arab countries or overseas, but many remain in refugee camps in the border countries, and have asked to return to their homes ever since. Although Palestinians found shelter in the Arab countries, they are still guests, and can be cast out at any time. They depend on their host nations, which have often mistreated the refugees. Palestinian refugees, therefore, have a precarious position in society and ardently want the establishment of a Palestinian state, claiming that only a nation of their own will guarantee their rights. In making this argument, they are similar to the Zionists in the 19th century.

From 1948 to 1967, Palestinians living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were ruled by Jordan and Egypt respectively. Some were refugees of the 1948 war and lived in refugee camps. Others were long-time inhabitants of the region. Although they were granted full citizenship by Jordan, West Bank Palestinians periodically rioted against King Hussein, whose response was to impose military rule.

After Israel's conquest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, the Israelis began merging the West Bank and the Gaza Strip's electrical grid, water and transportation systems into their own. Access and use of resources, such as water and electricity, were restricted and sometimes cut. Water was made accessible to Israeli farmers at the expense of Palestinian farmers and civilians. Curfews were imposed on certain towns and villages for months. Palestinians were rarely allowed to start or own a business. This forced many Palestinians into menial jobs which they could only find in Israel. Because Palestinians are not allowed to spend the night in Israel, they have to commute long hours to hold these jobs. All these measures have reduced the freedom of Palestinians in the territories, while making them economically dependent on Israel.

These long-time inhabitants of the area, numbering more than one and one half million people, eventually launched the *intifada* in defiance of Israeli law. This ongoing protest movement, from a generation of Palestinians that grew up under Israeli occupation, is unlikely to succeed alone because the Palestinians depend economically on Israel.

Most Palestinians realize that they must negotiate with Israel in order to regain some form of autonomy. Further, they know that every month that passes sees more Jewish settlements developing and makes future Palestinian rule more difficult. Jordan and Egypt no longer claim the West Bank or Gaza Strip, so that Palestinians are now in a position to discuss their own terms with the Israelis.

The PLO and its leader, Yasser Arafat, represent the concerns of the Palestinians, but the Israelis refuse to negotiate with them, despite Arafat's recent attitude of moderation. The PLO's support of Saddam Hussein

during the Gulf War strengthened Israel's belief that Arafat's professed attitude of moderation was a front to gain support from the United States. As a result of their position during the war, the Palestinians lost their improved public image and the financial backing of the wealthiest states in the region: Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. When President Bush pressed for peace talks, Israel reiterated that it would only meet with Palestinians living in the occupied territories and not with Arafat and the PLO.

The *intifada*, which has the support of the PLO, created new leaders and spokespeople. These leaders still consider Arafat to be their spokesperson to the world, but Israeli demands have brought them to the negotiating table.

The Western public was favorably impressed by the attitude of this delegation and its willingness to discuss the plight of the Palestinians without resorting to old rhetoric. However, not all Palestinians agree with this new attitude of moderation. There is a minority that opposes a negotiated settlement. This faction has engaged in violence to break up the talks, either by making Israel back out or by intimidating the Palestinians who wish to participate in the process.

Elsewhere in the Arab world

Many Arab states are motivated by concerns about their own survival. For example, not all Middle Eastern states are wealthy oil producers. In fact, several states (such as Jordan, Egypt and Syria) are poor, and governments that can not provide goods, food and security for their people are very unstable. To avoid chaos, these states often must turn to other nations for assistance. During the Cold War, some states in the region, like Saudi Arabia, turned to the United States. Others turned to the Soviet Union for military support. Moscow granted this aid in return for continued Arab opposition to the U.S. and Israel. The Soviet collapse now means that many states will probably look to the United States for help.

The Gulf War also had a great impact on the region. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait led to an alliance of the United States with many Arab countries. But at the same time, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's appeal for Arab unity against the involvement of Western military forces in the region won the support of a few Islamic countries. Iraq's Scud attack on Israel also drew the support of some Palestinians from the occupied territories and Jordan. The Gulf War made Arab unity seem impossible. The war sharpened divisions among Arab countries, and fueled the aggravation many poorer Muslims feel toward the richer Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, there was significant popular support in the Arab world for some of the issues Saddam Hussein brought into the spotlight. This, combined with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, has made some Arabs more vocal in their demand for greater political representation.

Islamic fundamentalism is an Islamic revivalist movement that has been growing since the 1960s and 1970s, though it only came to American attention in 1979, when the Ayatollah Khomeini led a revolution in Iran. This movement calls for a state that adheres literally to the teachings of Islam. The political activism of the Islamic fundamentalists, combined with a recent, fundamentalist electoral victory in Algeria, makes many leaders in the region feel threatened. If this movement gains access to power, either through elections or through a revolution as it did in Iran, it would bring radical changes to the secular governments currently in power. Countries like Egypt and Tunisia have repressed emerging fundamentalist parties. In other countries, like Jordan, fundamentalists have been elected to parliament. Israel is also concerned about the consequences of such a movement, because fundamentalists do not recognize Israel's existence.

All the Arab states are affected by these concerns, but it is important to look at them individually to understand the political realities of each.

Syria was for decades the largest Soviet client state in the region. When the Soviet Union first showed signs of collapse last year, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad realized that he would soon need to look elsewhere for financial and military assistance for his country. Assad made several efforts to be accepted by the West in the 1991. During the Gulf War, Syria joined with the United States in an alliance against Iraq. Because Syria is influential in Lebanon, Assad was important in gaining the release of the Western hostages in Beirut at the end of 1991. By attending the peace talks, Assad hopes to regain the Golan Heights and its water reserve, which Syria lost to Israel in the 1967 war, and safeguard his interests in Lebanon, which Syria has traditionally regarded as within its sphere of influence. Assad does not lose standing in the Arab world either, because he seems to be working for a fair settlement of the Palestinian question. Assad

wishes to impress the Western world with his willingness to talk and in this manner gain economic aid, not only from the U.S., but from other Western countries as well.

Egypt has enjoyed close relations with the U.S. since the 1973 war. Signing the Camp David accords in 1978 guaranteed Egypt a significant raise in U.S. foreign aid. Today, Egypt receives the second largest U.S. foreign aid package -- more than $2 billion annually. But closer ties with the U.S. and steadfast commitment to the peace treaty with Israel initially cost Egypt in the Arab world. Egypt was isolated politically and economically by the other Arab states. Only in the last few years has Egypt been accepted again by the Arab League. The boycott of Egypt was especially hard for many Egyptians to take. Since Nasser's rise to power and promotion of Pan-Arabism, Egypt had always been the leader in the Arab world. Egypt wants to restore its leadership in the Arab world, without reneging on its peace treaty with Israel. At the same time, it wants to do nothing to jeopardize its financial support from the only remaining superpower, the United States. Economic aid is crucial in maintaining domestic stability.

Lebanon struggled until recently with a civil war. Beirut, once regarded as one of the most beautiful cities on the Mediterranean, is largely in ruins, and its name is associated with terrorism and hostage taking. For years, the nation was very unstable, torn by a civil war which left no national leadership. Syria, and Lebanese militias backed by Syria, filled that power vacuum for most of the last decade. But recently the Lebanese government signed an agreement with Syria which allows Lebanon to govern itself eventually, although it will largely relinquish control of its foreign policy to Syria. Some would argue that this puts Lebanon further under Syria's control. Meanwhile, Israeli troops remain in southern Lebanon, and continue to pump water out of Lebanon's Litany river. The Lebanese are eager to begin rebuilding their country without the presence of these troops and to regain control of their water supply.

Jordan has been in an unofficial state of peace with Israel since the early 1970s. But Jordan still plays a key role in the Arab-Israeli conflict, because over two-thirds of the country's population is Palestinian. This fact has often been a source of political instability in Jordan, because the ruler, King Hussein, is not a Palestinian Arab. The king has been willing to discuss peace, and has strong personal contacts with the West. But he has often backed away from pressing for peace because he feels that, if he embarks on a policy that does not meet Palestinian demands, he may be overthrown or killed. Differences of opinion between the Palestinian majority and the king have in the past resulted in assassination attempts and led in 1970 to the expulsion of the PLO. In 1988, King Hussein relinquished Jordan's claim to the West Bank. As a result, West Bank Palestinians can now voice their own claim for autonomy.

The Gulf War had a profound impact on Jordan. With Israel to his west and Iraq to his east, King Hussein recognized that Jordan was in a militarily and politically precarious position. Because of Saddam's popularity with Palestinians in Jordan, King Hussein was unable to support the military coalition against Iraq. This cost him the financial backing of Saudi Arabia and jeopardized his friendship with the United States, neither of which Jordan could afford to lose. The war also left Jordan trying to absorb 300,000 Palestinians who were expelled from Kuwait.

King Hussein fears that further turmoil in the region could bring another wave of Palestinian refugees into Jordan and that this might eventually topple his government. Furthermore, Jordan's attempts at peace with Israel are jeopardized by Jordan's efforts toward democracy. Due to the popular opposition to Israel and the growing strength of religious fundamentalists, a democratic Jordan would be less likely to come to terms with Israel.

What are the issues in the peace talks?

The talks are an opportunity for a variety of issues to be debated. The most important ones are:

The status of the occupied territories: The West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights are still under Israel's military control. Syria wants the Golan Heights back and will then decide whether to acknowledge Israel. Israel has so far been unwilling to discuss the return of the Golan Heights, which it considers strategically vital for its security. Egypt and Jordan have renounced their claims on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and support the Palestinians' demands for control of these territories.

Jerusalem: This historic city is now under the control of Israel, which wishes it to become internationally recognized as its capital. Palestinians want East Jerusa-

lem, which is primarily populated by Arabs, to be the capital of a future Palestinian state. Muslims the world over want free access to East Jerusalem because of its religious significance.

Palestinian sovereignty: Palestinians would like to return to the proposals set out in the Camp David accords. Autonomy would be a transitional stage toward independence. Palestinians would have full control of their land, resources (especially its water and electricity), immigration, local government and internal police force. Israel would be responsible for its foreign affairs and would withdraw its security forces from the major Palestinian towns. The Likud government takes the position that the accords do not call for the withdrawal of Israel's security forces from the territories or allow the Palestinians to have their own police force. However, the Israelis have tentatively suggested that the Palestinians should control affairs such as their education and health care system, but not their resources or land.

Israeli settlements: In 1980, there were 10,000 Israelis living in the occupied territory; there are now more than 100,000 (most of whom live in East Jerusalem). Even so, Arabs far outnumber Israelis in the occupied territory. However, if further settlements are established, which is the current policy of the Israeli government, it would essentially result in the gradual Israeli annexation of the area.

Security: Israel does not feel secure in its pre-1967 borders. The government argues that they were too narrow, ten miles across at the narrowest point, and left Israel vulnerable. Likewise, Arab states want buffer zones and demilitarization to protect them from an aggressive Israel.

Lebanon: Lebanon wants the withdrawal of Israeli troops along the six to ten mile strip that Israel has occupied since 1982. Israel wants to retain control of this strip as a security zone in order to protect itself from Palestinian guerrilla attacks and the Syrian troops that occupy Lebanon.

The peace talks begun in Madrid are taking place against a backdrop of events that could end the talks at any moment. Jewish settlers continue to build houses and villages in the territories. There are still exchanges of violence between Palestinians and Israelis. There are also deeper questions as to the motives of the different parties and whether a true desire for compromise exists. But one thing is certain in these talks, and that is the dialogue itself. This may be the beginning of a process that could ultimately lead to a peaceful resolution of the present conflict.

IT'S TIME TO ENSURE ISRAEL'S LONG-RANGE SECURITY
MUBARAK
AND TIME TO STOP OUR WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS AND GIVE THE PALESTINIANS A HOMELAND.
SHAMIR
AND END THE INTIFADA AND BEGIN AN ERA OF TRUE ARAB-ISRAELI PEACE.
ARAFAT
AND ESTABLISH A STANDARD OF DEMOCRACY THROUGHOUT THE REGION.
ASSAD
I'D SAY WE'RE MAKING REAL PROGRESS HERE.
BUSH
I'D SAY THIS IS ONLY A CARTOON.
MODERATOR

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Part III: U.S. Thinking and the Politics of Peace

It was a long, difficult road to the peace conference in Madrid, which began the latest round of talks on the future of the Middle East. To get the parties to the negotiating table, the U.S. had to play a high stakes diplomatic game -- and always had to consider the deep animosities each side has toward the other.

In addition, events over the last 45 years have affected the way Americans view the Middle East. These attitudes and beliefs will be very important in deciding what role -- if any -- the U.S. should play in the Middle East peace effort.

The Cold War shapes U.S. thinking

For decades, U.S. thinking about the Middle East was dominated by Cold War strategy -- a strategy driven by the need to find allies who would help fight and contain communism. Israel became a strategic asset in the region; its intelligence network assisted the U.S. in gathering information and its secret service, the MOSSAD, assisted the U.S. in covert operations.

However, U.S. support for Israel has not been defined by strategic concerns alone. Many Americans feel that the United States has a special relationship with Israel that is based in part on a moral obligation to help the Jews after the Holocaust, and in part on a belief that, as the only state in the region with a Western-style political system, the U.S. should support it. These feelings have been effectively articulated in U.S. domestic policy.

For all of these reasons, the U.S. developed very close relations with Israel. But the United States formed ties with other nations in the region as well. The U.S. supported the royal family of Saudi Arabia and the Shah of Iran[2] (principally with arms sales) as buffers against Soviet expansion into the region, and after 1973 developed close ties with Egypt. Beyond this, U.S.-Arab relations were not very close.

The result was a fairly clear U.S. policy -- one that remained remarkably consistent for 25 years. The U.S. opposed the expansion of Soviet influence into the region. It would not forge links with Israel's immediate neighbors if they were openly hostile to Israel's security. Only when these states assured the United States that they would not harm Israel and would not forcibly promote the creation of an independent Palestinian state did the U.S. help them financially. After the 1967 war, the United States supported Israel's occupation of the territories until Israel's safety was secured by the recognition of its neighbors.

The Middle East was a major battlefield during the Cold War. In fact, during the 1973 war, each superpower warned the other to stay out of that conflict, and U.S. nuclear forces were on the highest state of alert since the Cuban missile crisis. The U.S. was also worried during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Not only does Afghanistan border Iran, at that time a close ally of the United States, but the invasion itself was, by far, the largest Soviet military operation since World War II. It demonstrated a new willingness on the part of the Soviets to use large-scale force. Because neither superpower trusted the other's intentions, peace talks between respective allies in the region never amounted to much.

The American public was suspicious of the Arab states, mostly due to the acts of terrorism committed against American citizens. In 1979, after the Shah was overthrown in Iran, Iranian revolutionaries held 52 U.S. embassy workers hostage for more than a year. Many say the crisis doomed President Carter's re-election campaign in 1980.

During the 1980s, U.S. attention turned to Beirut, where several Americans were held hostage by radical groups, some operating with Iranian or Syrian support. An effort to get these hostages back led to a U.S. covert arms-for-hostages deal that became known as the Iran-Contra Affair. Again a hostage crisis had damaged a presidency, this time Ronald Reagan's.

Among the most dramatic terrorist attacks on Americans were the shootings of American tourists at the Rome and Vienna airports on December 27, 1985, and the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988.

Although the U.S. was not directly involved in war in the Middle East during the 1980s, 241 U.S. marines died in the marine barracks bombing in 1983, and 37 died in the Iraqi missile attack on the USS *Stark* as it

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2. Most of the people of Iran are Muslim. Ethnically, they are not Arab.

escorted oil tankers in the Persian Gulf in 1987. These incidents heightened American mistrust and animosity toward the Arab states, and made Americans wary of involvement in the region.

In 1987, it seemed that the United States would not be eager to become involved in the peace process, and would certainly not be inclined to use its influence on behalf of many of the states that were in conflict with Israel.

New realities, new relationships

Official and long-standing U.S. policy toward the Middle East has been shifting over for the last several years. There has been an increase in sympathy for the Palestinians resulting from the *intifada* in 1987, and the opening of a U.S.-PLO dialogue in 1988. But this shift in opinion has been more noticeable since the end of the Cold War and the Gulf War against Iraq.

In 1987, in what has come to be known as the *intifada*, Palestinian protesters began to oppose the presence of Israeli soldiers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, fighting only with rocks and sticks. The choice of weapons was purposeful. By refraining from using guns, the Palestinians painted a picture of David against Goliath, recasting the image of the struggle from the one Yasser Arafat had represented.

The Israeli response was harsh: jailing Palestinians without trial, destroying the homes of suspected Palestinian terrorists, closing schools and universities, shooting at young demonstrators, and enforcing curfews. Politically, the *intifada* shifted the balance. In Israel, the *intifada* bolstered the peace movement, which increasingly opposed the government's policy in the occupied territories. In the Arab world, it spawned a new group of Palestinian leaders: no longer exiled Palestinians, but Palestinians who live under occupation. Furthermore, Arafat's renunciation of terrorism as a means of attaining a state and his official recognition of Israel in 1988 opened a U.S.-PLO dialogue which ended without any results in June 1990.

As the *intifada* effectively changed the international perception of forces in the region, the end of the Cold War signaled a change in the strategic balance in the Middle East.

During the Cold War, the U.S. was willing to gloss over its few differences with Israel because of Israel's strategic importance. But as the Cold War ended, U.S. and Israeli goals diverged and many in the U.S. began to wonder if Israel was still strategically important to the United States.

These changes in U.S. attitudes were greatly accelerated by two events in 1991: the steady collapse of the Soviet Union and the defeat of Iraq in the Gulf War.

Several states in the region had been dependent on Soviet financial support and military backing for years. With the Soviet Union in decline, this support decreased and effectively ended during the sweeping changes in the wake of the failed Soviet coup in August 1991. With the United States as the only remaining superpower, allies of the former Soviet Union, including Syria and the PLO, re-examined their situation, and decided that they needed to gain U.S. favor.

The Gulf War created the first U.S.-Arab coalition. Major Arab states like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and even Syria, joined the coalition against Iraq. At the same time, the U.S. oil supply was assured when Saudi Arabia -- which had led the oil embargo in 1973 -- offered to pump more oil to make up for what was lost from Iraq and Kuwait.

This new coalition forced the U.S. to re-evaluate its policy toward Israel. It marked the first time that Arab states were strategically more important than Israel to the United States. During the Gulf War, Israel could not help the U.S. militarily for fear that entering the war would break up the anti-Iraq Arab coalition. By not retaliating against Iraqi Scud missile attacks, Israel earned the appreciation of the U.S. and its Western and Arab coalition partners.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the Gulf War committed the U.S. to involvement in the Middle East peace talks. The U.S. had been reluctant to get involved in the Middle East after the 1983 marine barracks bombing and the 1986 Iran-Contra Affair. But President Bush promised that, after defeating Iraq, the U.S. would turn its attention to achieving lasting peace in the region. Bush hoped to use the long-standing ties between Israel and the U.S., in addition to the newly improved relations with the Arab world, to bring peace to the region in the first test of the "new world order" that he had promised as the war began. After months of negotiating by Secretary of State James Baker, the Middle East peace talks opened in Madrid in October 1991.

Is peace possible?

Recent events have changed U.S. thinking in the Middle East, as well as the thinking of some of the leaders in the region. Does all this mean that there will be peace in the Middle East? Not necessarily. In fact, many observers urge caution about being too optimistic.

They point out that this new willingness to negotiate is, at best, based on strategic concerns and not on a genuine desire for peace. For example, many Arabs think that Yitzhak Shamir only wants to gain more territory for Israel, that he is only responding to pressure from the U.S. to attend the talks, and is not sincere in his negotiating efforts. At the same time, many Israelis think that the Palestinian leadership and Syria are still radical and threatening, but are wearing a moderate mask to win the battle of public opinion. Similarly, many wonder if the Arab states are just trying to get U.S. financial aid, or trying to repair broken Arab unity in the wake of the Gulf War by rallying around the Palestinian cause.

There may also not be enough time for this conference to work. Israeli settlements are increasing at such a rate that many feel no matter what happens at the bargaining table, there will always be an Israeli presence in the territories. The rise of conservative governments in Israel and the Arab states will likely make discussion more difficult as each side falls back on old positions.

Finally, the effort is still lacking a very important ingredient -- good will. Arabs and Israelis alike point to the dramatic gesture of Anwar Sadat's surprising visit to Jerusalem in 1977. Many believe that visit made Egyptian-Israeli peace possible -- and few see an Anwar Sadat in the Middle East today.

Yet the fact that Israeli officials and official representatives of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinians began to talk directly about peace in late 1991 can only be regarded as a development of great historic importance. The exchange of harsh rhetoric, unreasonable demands from both sides, stalling tactics, hard bargaining, and even occasional breakdowns were all to be expected. Even though the problems to be resolved are enormously difficult, and they cannot be settled quickly or easily, for the first time there are negotiating partners willing to talk to each other.

Dilemmas for the U.S.

Ongoing negotiations on peace in the Middle East mean that the U.S. will have some difficult decisions to make in the very near future. What kind of relationship should the U.S. have with Israel?

During the 1980s, the U.S. and Israel had some highly publicized disagreements. For example, the United States discovered that a U.S. citizen, Jonathan Pollard, was spying on the U.S. for Israel. One of the most important issues on the U.S.-Israeli agenda is the debate over loan guarantees to Israel. The dispute began last summer, when Israel asked for $10 billion in loan guarantees for new construction to house Russian and Ethiopian immigrants. Israel needs the U.S. to vouch for it in order to get a loan of this size. If Israel does not repay the loan, it could cost the U.S. up to $1.8 billion. In the past, the United States has provided such guarantees, but the peace talks have complicated this issue. Many of these new homes are to be built on the occupied Palestinian territories. U.S. loan guarantees to Israel, whether or not directly allocated to building settlements in the occupied territories, will support this effort. The U.S. was afraid that new settlements on the eve of the conference would put the U.S.-sponsored peace talks in jeopardy. For this reason, President Bush delayed a decision on the Israeli request.

This request resurfaced early in 1992. Bush wants the Israeli government to freeze the building of new settlements in the occupied territory, although Israel could finish the construction currently underway. To Israel, accepting U.S. conditions on the loan undermines Israeli sovereignty. Israeli officials have stated that they will not allow the loan guarantee question to stop them from building new settlements or force them to compromise over the Palestinian issue. Palestinians warn that they will not attend any talks if further construction proceeds and if the U.S. grants this guarantee.

The U.S. also must decide about relations with the Arab world. The biggest decisions will affect two of the most important U.S. allies in the Gulf War, Egypt and Syria.

• Egypt and the U.S. have had fairly good relations in the past 15 years, but after the Gulf War the U.S. made a gesture it rarely makes even to its closest friends: it wrote off almost $7 billion in debt that Egypt owed the U.S. and continued to provide more

than $2 billion annually in foreign aid. In the post-Cold War world, Egypt has no one else to turn to for major financial and military aid. Should the U.S. continue to be Egypt's primary benefactor?

• The U.S. seems to be entering into a substantial relationship with Syria, including granting monetary aid. However, there is still concern about Syrian support for terrorism, human rights abuses, arms proliferation, and the possible use of U.S. aid to buy missiles from China. Should the U.S. offer Syria aid to make up for what it lost when the Soviet Union collapsed?

Finally, in addition to its relationship with each of the parties to the conflict, the U.S. will have to decide what its overall approach to the peace talks should be: Should the U.S. choose sides? Should the U.S. persevere until a settlement is achieved? Should the United States withdraw from the region altogether? Should the U.S. urge the UN to play a greater role in resolving the conflict? Americans have not voiced a clear consensus on the course the U.S. should take.

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Option
1

The U.S. Should Actively Support Israel's Annexation of the Territories

Since 1948, the United States and Israel have had a special relationship. The U.S. was one of the first nation's to grant diplomatic recognition of the new state in 1948, and has been instrumental in the development of the state of Israel for the past 25 years. Since that time, Israel has remained the only nation in the region that is based on the principles we cherish -- including democracy, rule of law, and free enterprise. Israel has also become one of our most steadfast allies, and played a key role in our effort to stop Soviet communism. In return, the U.S. has vowed to protect Israel from those who seek to destroy it.

Today, the Cold War is over and the world has dramatically changed. However, one thing has not changed over the last 40 years -- Israel still faces threats to its survival. Nineteen of 20 Arab states officially refuse to recognize Israel, boycott Israeli goods, and consider themselves to be in a state of war with Israel. At the same time, Palestinians on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip continue their *intifada* against Israel. Many Israelis were worried when they saw Palestinians in the West Bank and Jordan support the Iraqi Scud missile attacks on Israeli civilians during the Gulf War. Because Israel still faces these threats, we can not ask it to trade land for peace. Nor should we support the creation of a new Palestinian state. These actions would only threaten Israeli security by providing a base for terrorist attacks or a staging ground for an invasion by more powerful Arab nations. By remaining in all the territories it now occupies, Israel will be better able to protect itself. Therefore, the U.S. should recognize Israel's sovereignty in the territories.

What solution to the conflict should the U.S. pursue? Israel is a good friend and will continue to be an important ally and advocate of U.S. interests in the region. Therefore, as peace talks progress, the U.S. must support the annexation of the territories which will guarantee Israel's safety and security.

What steps should the U.S. take?

The U.S. should urge Israel to:

- Continue to administer and develop the territories won in the 1967 war, as a way to provide security from invasion and terrorist attacks by its Arab neighbors;
- Continue to have troops in the security zone of southern Lebanon to prevent terrorist attacks from bases there;
- Offer limited local self-government for the Palestinians living in the territories.

The U.S. should pressure the Arab states to:

- Recognize Israel's existence and end the state of war between them and Israel;
- End the economic boycott of Israel and encourage the Palestinians to end the *intifada*.

We should also:

- Make recognition of Israel the condition for all foreign aid to the Middle East;
- Recognize united Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move our embassy there;
- Offer loan guarantees to Israel so that it can continue to build new homes for Jewish immigrants.

PROS

Supporting Arguments:

1. The territories Israel now occupies (the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights, and the security zone in southern Lebanon) are strategically essential to its security.

2. Israel is an ally against a common enemy. Arab states, like Syria, have waged a terrorist war against American citizens.

3. Israel has always been a key part of U.S. covert operations and intelligence gathering in the Middle East. Continued U.S.-Israeli cooperation is invaluable to U.S. security in the region.

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4. The U.S. demanded for years that the Soviet Union let Jews emigrate. Now that they are free to go, the U.S. has a moral obligation to make sure that they have a place to resettle in Israel.

5. The biblical land of Israel -- including Judea and Samaria -- was granted to the Jewish people by God. The Jews have a right to live there in safety.

CONS

Opposing Arguments:

1. The U.S. must not sanction the occupation of land that is acquired by military force, even if it is supported by religious or historical claims. Not only does military occupation violate the principle of self-determination, but it will result in increased conflict around the world.

2. Israeli occupation of Arab territories has violated international standards of human rights. Palestinians have been killed, jailed without trial, and tortured by the Israeli military. The homes of those suspected of terrorism have been destroyed. The U.S. must not support any nation that violates human rights.

3. Key Palestinian leaders have renounced terrorism, recognized Israel's right to exist, and expressed a willingness to negotiate with Israel. Unqualified U.S. support of Israel only serves to make Israel less compromising. This will destroy the new Palestinian openness and any possibility of peace.

4. U.S. policy must consider other concerns in the region, such as access to oil, closer relations with the Arab world, and promoting principles like self-determination. Our traditional alliance with Israel, which has created anti-American feeling in the region, jeopardizes the opportunity presented by the Gulf War for a better alliance with some of the Arab states.

5. The occupied territories do not guarantee Israel's security. Furthermore, because the occupation is in violation of international law, it is turning the world community against Israel.

6. We are already spending too much energy and money in the Middle East; we should focus instead on domestic issues.

7. Israel violates the principles we cherish by treating Arab citizens of Israel as second class citizens. If Israel annexed the territories, Palestinians living in the occupied territories would be subject to similar treatment.

Option 2

The U.S. Should Support the Creation of a Palestinian State and Forge Closer Ties with the Arab World

U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East has traditionally been guided by strategic concerns, such as preventing Soviet expansion. This concern led the United States to support some states simply because they opposed communism. This is the case with Israel. But now that the Cold War is over, the United States can pursue the same goals in the Middle East that it has in other parts of the world -- promoting self-determination, democracy and ending violations of human rights.

In the wake of the Gulf War, the Middle East is a very different place. Our Arab allies, especially Syria and Egypt, were helpful in the effort to defeat Iraq, liberate Kuwait and support the vital interest of U.S. access to oil. In future conflicts, closer ties with these states will be valuable again. Meanwhile, Israel is secure. The divisions in the Arab world caused by the Gulf War make the prospect of a united Arab attack on Israel very unlikely. If the Arab nations do attack, Israel is militarily superior. At the same time, Israel continues to occupy land illegally and deny Palestinians self-determination. U.S. support of Israel has sparked anti-American sentiment throughout the region for years and made Americans the target of terrorism. The U.S. must become a strong advocate of a Palestinian state and begin forging closer ties with the Arab world. This policy will greatly reduce the anti-American sentiment that has been used in the past by radical rulers, such as the Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, to garner support for their regimes. It will allow American ideals of democracy, as well as economic development to filter into the region.

What solution to the conflict should the U.S. pursue? The U.S. should, in the future, try to forge closer ties with the Arab world in order to protect our interests. At the same time, we should promote the cause of self-determination for the Palestinian people. Therefore, as peace talks progress, the U.S. must support a solution that guarantees the creation of a Palestinian state and strengthens our ties with Arab nations.

What steps should the U.S. take?

The U.S. should pressure Israel to:

- Withdraw its troops from the occupied territories and the so-called security zone in southern Lebanon;
- Remove settlements from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and East Jerusalem.

The U.S. should urge the Arab states to:

- Assist in the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with East Jerusalem as its capital;
- Recognize Israel, but only after the occupation is over;
- Cooperate fully with the U.S. on regional security issues and other critical regional problems.

We should also:

- Greatly reduce all economic and military aid and trade with Israel if they do not comply with this plan;
- Recognize the Palestinian state and sponsor its membership in the UN;
- Stop all covert activities with Israel.

PROS

Supporting Arguments:

1. The United States must support self-determination for people all around the world. This is a basic American value and we should do no less for the Palestinian people living in the territories, who have been unjustly subjected to outside rule.

2. Israel has acquired territory at the expense of its Arab neighbors, and has violated the human rights of Palestinians under occupation. The U.S. must take a moral stand and refuse to be party to such behavior.

3. The Palestinians have already compromised in their willingness to accept the state of Israel. It is time for Israel to accept a Palestinian state in the territories.

4. The U.S. and its allies have a vital need for Middle Eastern oil. We should try to establish better relations with the Arab nations to ensure stable prices and access to oil.

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5. Our support for Israel and Israeli policies was a liability to the U.S. during the Gulf War because it threatened to break up the U.S.-Arab coalition. We should support the end of Israeli occupation now, so that this will not be an issue in future relations with Arab states.

6. Palestinian refugees to other countries are always treated as outsiders in their host countries. They are frequently discriminated against and denied the full benefits of citizenship. Only a nation of their own will guarantee their rights.

CONS

Opposing Arguments:

1. Many Arab governments, notably Syria and Iraq, have violated human rights, including slaughtering thousands of their own people. The United States must not ignore these violations of international law by supporting these states.

2. The U.S. should not forge closer ties with Arab governments or organizations that sponsor terrorism against Americans (such as Syria), or those that supported Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War (such as the PLO and Jordan).

3. A Palestinian state will never be truly neutral. Many in the Middle East will still use this new country as a base for terrorism against Israel, possibly leading to another war in the region.

4. There never was a Palestinian state, and there is no need for one now. Palestinians are Arabs and can call any Arab nation home. Palestinians already form the majority of Jordan's population.

5. This plan is based on the false notion that the U.S. can "deliver" Israel. Israel is not a puppet of the U.S. and will not simply follow the directions of Washington.

6. Because the oil-exporting Arab states need to keep their foreign markets, and because they feel the need for U.S. protection against Iraq and Iran, they will sell oil to the United States regardless of the condition of U.S.-Arab or U.S.-Israeli relations. Therefore it is not necessary to design a Middle Eastern policy based on closer Arab ties.

7. We are already sending billions of dollars to the Middle East and receiving little in return. Supporting a new state in the region will be even more costly and no more beneficial to the U.S.

Option
3

The U.S. Should Persuade All Parties to Accept an Even-Handed Settlement

For forty years, Arabs and Israelis have fought bitterly over issues that seem to permit no compromise: religion, territory, even the right to exist. But today, for the first time, there is a real chance to bring about a lasting peace in the Middle East. The U.S. must not stand on the sidelines while peace is obstructed because the parties refuse to compromise. We have a duty to bring a lasting peace to the people of the Middle East, especially after our military victory in the Gulf War. This is all the more true now that the U.S. is the world's only remaining superpower. The United States has an obligation not just to encourage peace, but to develop a compromise solution and use our influence to persuade all in the region to accept it.

Many attempts have been made to reach a settlement in the conflict between Arabs and Israelis. However, only one has proven successful -- the U.S.-mediated Camp David accords, which brought about peace between Egypt and Israel. The success of that effort depended on the willingness of both sides to compromise by trading land for peace, and on the active role the U.S. played in the negotiations. This role must be repeated now to resolve the conflict. A comprehensive peace in the Middle East today must also be based on a willingness to compromise. In practice, this means Israel will have to surrender territory that it has occupied for the last 20 years. At the same time, the Palestinians must compromise on their national aspirations by offering full recognition of Israel's legitimacy and permanence in the region in return for some form of Palestinian self-government.

What solution to the conflict should the U.S. pursue? The United States is in a unique position as the only mediator that has been acceptable to all parties in the conflict. Therefore, as the peace talks progress, the U.S. must use its economic and political influence to force both sides to make compromises that will lead to peace. In the future, once the territorial debate is settled, the U.S. must pursue an even-handed approach to the region. It will use compliance with international principles of human rights, commitment to non-aggression, and renunciation of terrorism as the requirements for diplomatic recognition and economic assistance for nations in the region.

What steps should the U.S. take?

The U.S. should pressure Israel to:

- Immediately end the construction of new settlements in the occupied territories;
- Compromise on the extent and character of military occupation in the territories, while retaining some strategically important areas for security;
- Withdraw from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon in exchange for the permanent demilitarization of those areas and the placement of an international force there;
- Accept Palestinian self-government.

The U.S. should pressure the Arab states to:

- Immediately suspend the economic boycott and encourage the Palestinians to end the *intifada*;
- Sign peace treaties with Israel in order to reassure Israel that Palestinian autonomy will not result in further aggression on the part of the Arab states.

We should also:

- Make compliance with human rights accords the condition for foreign aid to any state in the Middle East.

PROS

Supporting Arguments:

1. The only agreements that have been successful in the Middle East have been arranged by the United States. The U.S. must again take a leading role and must be willing to enforce a compromise if a lasting solution is to be attained.

2. Only a compromise solution will bring lasting peace to the Middle East. The parties to the conflict are finally interested in compromising and the U.S. needs to push this negotiation before interest fades and extremists gain control.

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3. In the wake of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the United States is the only remaining superpower with real influence in the region. We have a responsibility to use this influence to move the parties in the region toward compromise.

4. The U.S. has a vital interest in settling the Arab-Israeli conflict in order to increase stability in the region. Therefore we must commit our resources to finding a solution.

CONS

Opposing Arguments:

1. The United States must not impose a solution on the people of the Middle East. This plan makes the U.S. directly involved in the process and responsible for its success or, more likely, failure.

2. Extremists in Israel not only do not want to give back land, they would like to expand to all of the lands of biblical Israel. Extremists among the Palestinians not only do not want to settle for anything less than statehood, they would like to retake all of Palestine back for the Arabs. Considering the political pressures on both sides, this compromise will be impossible.

3. Since this solution calls for Israel to relinquish territory, it will severely damage Israel's security by leaving it vulnerable to attack.

4. This plan does not guarantee Palestinians the one thing they need to make them equals with the Israelis in the land of Palestine -- an independent nation.

5. This will commit the United States to long-term, direct involvement in the affairs of the Middle East and, in the long run, may be extremely costly.

Option 4

The U.S. Should Withdraw from the Region

The United States has been directly involved in the Middle East for many years, mainly to prevent Soviet expansion into the region. The U.S. also took it upon itself to be the protector of the state of Israel and a major financial supporter of both Israel and Egypt, at a cost of several billions of dollars each year. At the same time, U.S. presidents and diplomats have invested enormous amounts of time and prestige trying to bring about a solution to the seemingly unresolvable conflict between Arabs and Israelis. But in the wake of the Cold War and our victory in the Gulf War, the Middle East is a very different place, one that no longer requires a major U.S. presence, if in fact it ever did. The United States should stop pursuing costly and unnecessary involvement in the Middle East and should focus its attention on domestic issues and affairs in its own hemisphere.

Tensions in the Middle East have been dramatically reduced in the last few months, leaving us free of any threats to our vital interests in the region. We have traditionally worried about Soviet influence, but the end of the Cold War removed the Soviet threat and left Syria, which was the Soviet Union's closest ally in the region, in a weaker military and political position. Syria now has a reason to make peace with Israel and put an end to terrorism against the U.S. The victory of the United States in the Gulf War left Iraq unable to threaten its neighbors. It also ensured a steady flow of oil to the West. And the security of Israel seems assured since Israel is effectively at peace with two of its neighbors, Egypt and Jordan, and faces no real threat from any other country in the region or from the PLO (which was discredited and hurt financially by its support of Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War). For all these reasons, U.S. interests in the region are minimal. We should invest the time and money we would spend on the Middle East in some of our long-standing problems at home, such as economic development, crime, homelessness, the environment and education.

What solution to the conflict should the U.S. pursue? This is not our problem to solve. We brought the parties to the bargaining table. Now our work is done and we need no longer participate in the process. If a lasting peace is possible at all, it can only be achieved by those in the Middle East, and we should accept any solution that they find. Therefore, now that the peace process has begun, we must immediately withdraw from the region and focus our attention on our domestic agenda and foreign policy concerns here in the Western Hemisphere.

What steps should the U.S. take?

The U.S. should urge Israel and the Arab states to:

- Continue to meet in order to find a fair and equitable solution to their conflict.

We should also:

- Immediately eliminate economic and military aid to Israel and Egypt;
- End the practice of "writing off" debts owed to us by Middle Eastern nations, and stop the practice of guaranteeing development loans;
- Remove the remaining U.S. forces from the Middle East in an orderly but prompt fashion;
- Address our domestic needs and issues in the Western Hemisphere.

PROS

Supporting Arguments:

1. The United States does not have a special responsibility to the world. Accepting the "responsibility to lead" ruined the British Empire earlier in this century. The same fate awaits the U.S. if it continues to accept global responsibilities.

2. We do not have to rely on Middle Eastern oil. We can obtain enough oil by using domestic oil, different oil sources in the Western Hemisphere, alternative fuels, and by learning to conserve energy. Therefore we do not need to shape our foreign policy as if we were an active participant in Middle Eastern politics.

3. The money we are currently sending to the Middle East can be better used at home on domestic problems.

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4. We have ignored human rights violations in other places, such as Northern Ireland and China. It is hypocritical to suggest that we must commit ourselves to human rights issues in the Middle East.

5. Removing ourselves from Middle Eastern affairs will help the region. It will force these countries to deal directly with each other and allow them to be self-reliant.

6. The Arab-Israeli conflict is a century-old conflict based on claims going back millennia. It is not our problem, nor should we try to solve it.

CONS

Opposing Arguments:

1. Too many nations in the Middle East depend on U.S. economic assistance and military protection. Withdrawal of all U.S. aid will cause instability and chaos throughout the region.

2. U.S. withdrawal from the region will set off a dramatic increase in arms acquisitions by Middle Eastern states. This new arms race will lead to a dangerous build-up of weapons in an already tense region.

3. Even if all is now relatively calm in the Middle East, another crisis may come up in the future that will directly affect our access to oil. We must remain prepared to protect vital U.S. interests in the region.

4. As the world's only superpower, we have a moral responsibility to help people in need and we would be betraying this responsibility by withdrawing from the region.

5. Since the declaration of the state of Israel in 1948, no peace discussions or settlements in the Arab-Israeli conflict have ever been achieved without pressure from the United States. Only our continued involvement can bring about any peace in the region.

6. The threat to Israel may seem diminished now, but Syria, for example, has developed chemical warheads that could reach Israel.

Option
5

The U.S. Should Support United Nations Administration of the Territories

For decades, the Arab-Israeli conflict has defied all attempts at a long-term settlement. The tensions and mistrust in the region run so deep that any negotiation between the parties brings about little progress. In addition to the long-standing disputes over land, there are many other problems in the Middle East. One of the most dangerous is the build up of arms in the region and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (chemical, biological and nuclear weapons). No one country acting alone can deal with these problems. Instead, we must cooperate internationally to solve problems in the region. Furthermore, the world's growing interdependence makes such an approach inevitable. The U.S. should pursue international approaches to finding a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The United Nations, as the representative of the international community, is uniquely qualified to solve these problems and restore international peace and security. For years, the UN sent peacekeeping forces to trouble spots around the world. For example, after World War II, the UN became the trustee of dozens of colonies, overseeing their transition to independence. Recently, the UN has been active in setting up "Transition Authorities," which oversee war-torn or occupied nations, such as Namibia and Cambodia, until peace is assured and a new government is formed. Finally, the UN actively inspects weapons programs (such as those in Iraq) to make sure that nuclear weapons are not proliferating. With the Cold War over, the UN can now use its powers to guarantee the security of Israel, oversee the eventual development of a viable Palestinian state, and end the arms race in the Middle East.

What solution to the conflict should the U.S. pursue? Only a truly international solution, based on cooperation among nations, will work in the Middle East. Therefore, the U.S. should encourage and actively support the United Nations to play the central role in the peace effort. The UN must also lead the initiative to end the dangerous build up of weapons in the region. When the time is right, it can also help the Palestinians establish their own form of government, whether it is a neutral independent state or a federation with Jordan or even Israel.

What steps should the U.S. take?

The U.S. should urge the United Nations to:

- Use its authority under the UN Charter to become the administrator of a new "Palestinian UN Protected Zone" (consisting of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) and create a "Transitional Authority" led by the Secretary General to oversee the territory during a five-year transition to full Palestinian self-determination;

- Send peacekeeping forces into all of the disputed territories to prevent further violence and human rights abuses and to guarantee Israel's security by monitoring these territories in the same way it presently monitors Israel's borders;

- Declare an embargo on arms sales and shipments to the Middle East, and monitor the development of weapons of mass destruction.

The U.S. should urge Israel and the Arab states to:

- Withdraw all of their militaries from the disputed territories of southern Lebanon, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and accept the permanent demilitarization of these areas and the presence of UN peacekeeping forces.

We should also:

- Assist in the international solution to this conflict by banning all sales of U.S. weapons to the Middle East and pressuring all other nations to participate in the arms embargo. We should also cut off economic aid to any state that violates the arms embargo or the demilitarization of the region;

- Offer U.S. troops under UN command as part of any peacekeeping force. We should also urge other major powers to contribute comparable forces to this UN command. This will prevent any accusation that it is a peace force led by the U.S. serving only U.S. interests.

PROS

Supporting Arguments:

1. Now that the Cold War is over, it is possible for the first time to forge an effective international solution in this divided region.

2. The United Nations is the only organization that can bring about a fair settlement to the conflict because it is an impartial arbiter of disputes and has had many years of experience handling trust territories, peace keeping, and transitional governments. It is the best organization to deal with the conflict.

3. The Gulf War, although it proved our military might, would not have been possible without the financial backing of our allies. This war reflects the growing interdependence of the world and points to international cooperation as the best way to solve complicated problems.

4. By ignoring UN Resolution 242, we undermine the credibility of the UN. By implementing 242, we build on the experience of international cooperation during the Gulf War, promote respect for international law, and move closer to a world order based on the UN Charter.

&

5. An international organization is less likely to be accused of defending the interests of a single party and therefore more likely to succeed in achieving peace in the region. Furthermore, the UN's recent repeal of a 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism has removed the grounds for the claim that the UN was not impartial on the Palestinian question.

6. The creation of a neutral, disarmed and internationally monitored Palestine will make Israel more, not less, secure. It will remove the point of contention between Palestinian Arabs and Israelis. It will diminish the friction between Israel and its neighboring Arab states, and it will serve as a buffer between them.

CONS

Opposing Arguments:

1. The UN tried to solve this problem before -- with the 1947 partition plan -- and failed. Although the UN has changed, this plan is still too ambitious to be implemented by the UN.

2. The idea of the UN leading an "international effort" is a myth, since the organization has always been dominated by the United States, the Soviet Union, and the leading countries of Western Europe. This plan is really just another example of foreign efforts to control the Middle East.

3. By turning everything over to the UN, the U.S. will be giving up its ability to design its own foreign policy in a region with vital U.S. interests.

4. The UN has never been impartial with regard to the Middle East conflict; it has always supported Palestinian demands and approved dozens of resolutions against Israel. There is no reason to believe the UN can now be impartial here.

Ten-Day Lesson Plan

DAY ONE

Introducing the Arab-Israeli conflict: preparation

Objective: This two-day discussion activity will introduce key issues underlying the Arab-Israeli conflict.

1. Announce that the class will go back in history to 1920 to examine the Arab-Israeli conflict. Distribute "Arabs and Jews in Palestine -- 1920." After students read the handout, call on them to identify other parts of the world where two peoples have claimed the same land (e.g., native Americans and European settlers in the United States, French and Germans in Alsace-Lorraine, Africans and Afrikaners in South Africa, Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland).

2. Divide the class into groups of four students. Instruct the groups to use the remainder of the period to draw up a compromise proposal that will accommodate both Arabs and Jews. Issues to be addressed are outlined in the handout under "To Think About."

Homework: Students should read the Introduction of the background readings to prepare for the Day Two activity.

DAY TWO

Introducing the Arab-Israeli conflict: presentation

1. Call on a spokesperson from each group to present their proposals for compromise to the class. Ask them to begin with a brief assessment of the goals and concerns of both Arabs and Jews in 1920. Record the most coherent proposals on the chalkboard.

2. After the presentations are complete, compare the proposals on the chalkboard. How do the proposals attempt to weigh the competing claims to Palestine? How did the rise of nationalism complicate the issue? Why was the period after World War I an important historical juncture for the development of the present Arab-Israeli conflict?

Homework: Students should read Part I of the background readings and complete "Study Guide -- Part I."

DAY THREE

Mapping the Arab-Israeli conflict

Objective: This one-day exercise will clarify the territorial changes connected with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

1. Distribute "Mapping the Arab-Israeli Conflict." Emphasize that students should use both Part I of the background readings and the maps on page 10 to complete the worksheet. (Students may be given the option of working individually or in pairs.)

2. After students have completed the worksheet, ask them to identify the events that left the greatest impact on the map of the Middle East (e.g., the 1948 and 1967 wars, or the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty). Which geographic areas are currently at the center of the Arab-Israeli conflict?

Homework: Students should read Part II of the background readings and complete "Study Guide -- Part II" to prepare for a role play on the first round of the peace talks held in Madrid in the fall of 1991.

DAY FOUR

Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict from a Middle Eastern perspective: preparation

Objective: This two-day role play will help students better understand the perspectives of the participants in the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

1. Ask students to identify recent international events that explain why Israelis and Arabs have agreed to take part in peace talks. How are the talks related to the collapse of the Soviet Union? The Persian Gulf War? The record immigration of Jews from the former Soviet Union? The *intifada*?

2. Divide the class into groups of three to five students. Each group should be assigned the role of a delegation at the Madrid peace conference (i.e., Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, Syrian, Egyptian, or Lebanese). Instruct the groups to use the remainder of the period to formulate a convincing three-to-five minute opening statement on the perspectives and goals of their respective delegation. The statements should be based on student responses to Part I and Part II of the Study Guide. For example, the Palestinian delegation should begin by explaining the historical territorial claims of the Palestinians, summarize the Palestinian viewpoint on the formation of Israel, and Israel's subsequent conflicts with neighboring Arab states, and assess the current status of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Finally, the delegation should summarize the goals the Palestinians wish to achieve at the peace conference.

DAY FIVE

Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict from a Middle Eastern perspective: presentation

1. Call on group spokespersons to present the statements of their respective groups. Encourage spokespersons to speak clearly and convincingly. After the opening presentations, call on group members to point out what their delegations would consider distortions of history by other groups.

2. After concluding the role play, ask students to identify the major areas of disagreement between the Arabs and the Israelis. How do the positions of the Arab delegations differ from one another? Explain that in fact the Palestinians and Jordanians were represented by a single delegation in Madrid. What historical factors account for that arrangement? Which issues seem most difficult to resolve?

Homework: Students should read Part III of the background readings and complete "Study Guide -- Part III."

DAY SIX

Advocating the five options: organization and preparation

Objective: This three-day simulation calls on students to advocate one of the five options. Students will come away with a deeper understanding of the range of policy options available to the United States while also exploring the relationship between basic values and foreign policy.

1. Inform students that they will participate in a simulation using the options and the background readings. Explain that each of the five options presents a distinct viewpoint on U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict.

2. Divide the class into five groups of three to four students. Assign an option to each group. The remainder of the class, preferably four to seven students, will serve as members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate.

3. Distribute "Presenting Your Option" to the five option groups and "Charting U.S. Foreign Policy" to the Foreign Relations Committee members. Inform students that each option group will be called upon on Day Seven to present the case for its assigned option to the Foreign Relations Committee. Explain that option groups should follow the instructions in "Presenting Your Option." Note that the option groups should begin by assigning each member a role. While the option groups are preparing for their presentation, members of the Foreign Relations Committee should develop cross-examination questions for Day Eight (see "Charting U.S. Foreign Policy").

Homework: Students should complete preparations for the simulation.

DAY SEVEN

Advocating the five options: presentation

1. Organize the room so that the five option groups face a row of desks reserved for the Foreign Relations Committee. Explain that the simulation will begin with three-to-five minute presentations by the spokespersons of the option groups. Encourage spokespersons to speak clearly and convincingly.

2. Remind the class, including students in the option groups, that they should take notes on the presentations of each of the spokespersons to prepare for cross-examination on Day Eight.

Homework: Students should complete preparations for cross-examination questions.

DAY EIGHT

Advocating the five options: cross-examination

1. Invite Foreign Relations Committee members to ask cross-examination questions. Make sure that each Foreign Relations Committee member has an opportunity to ask at least one question. After Foreign Relations Committee members have posed questions, invite members of the option groups to challenge one another with cross-examination questions. The questions should be fairly evenly distributed among all five option groups. During cross-examination, allow any option group member to respond. As an alternative approach, permit cross-examination after each option is presented.

2. Instruct Foreign Relations Committee members to fill out the first part of their "Evaluation Form" worksheets in class. The second part of the worksheet should be completed as homework.

Homework: Students should read each of the five options and complete "Focusing Your Thoughts."

DAY NINE

Crafting student options

Objective: This one-day exercise will guide students toward clarifying their own beliefs and values as they develop a coherent policy option.

1. Call on members of the Foreign Relations Committee to share their evaluations of the option groups. Which arguments were most convincing? Which values were most appealing? Poll the entire class regarding the six values listed in "Presenting Your Option." Which values do students consider most important?

2. Review the list of beliefs from "Focusing Your Thoughts," calling on students to indicate which beliefs they strongly support. Ask students to explain the relationship between beliefs and policy steps. For example, what

policies would be based on a belief that Israel is our most trustworthy ally in the Middle East, or that the United States would benefit from closer relations with Arab countries?

3. Distribute "Crafting Student Options." Students should complete the worksheet in class. (Students may be given the option of working individually or in pairs.) Note that students will use their option worksheets to write a letter on Day Ten.

DAY TEN

Expressing your views

Objective: This one-day exercise will compel students to present the case for their own option in coherent and convincing form.

1. Inform students that they will be writing a letter based on their own option to a member of Congress, President Bush, presidential candidates, or the editor of a local newspaper.

2. Suggest that students devote the first paragraph of their letter to an analysis of recent events. For example, ask students to consider how their options address recent developments in the Arab-Israeli peace talks, the economic recession at home, the end of the Cold War, and other vital issues. In the second paragraph of their letters, students should present their option in the context of recent events while summarizing the answers to the first two questions of "Crafting Student Options." (Students may be given the option of working individually or in pairs.)

Arabs and Jews in Palestine -- 1920

The years following World War I brought substantial changes to the people living in the area of the Middle East known as Palestine. Since the 16th century, Palestine had been part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. When the war ended in 1918, however, the Allies forced the defeated Ottoman Turks to give up control of much of their empire. The victorious British army stood as the most powerful force in Palestine.

Under the authority of the League of Nations, Great Britain was allowed to govern Palestine. In 1914, this area was home to approximately 550,000 Arabs and 85,000 Jews. Both communities traced their ancestral roots to the same land. Most of the Jews had arrived in recent decades from Europe. Their numbers were rapidly growing as thousands of European Jews dreamed of establishing a homeland in the ancient land of Israel. Meanwhile, the Arabs had lived in the area for many centuries. Before World War I, many Arab leaders had looked forward to breaking away from Turkish rule and governing themselves.

In 1920, it was hoped that both Arabs and Jews could live together peacefully in Palestine, with each community enjoying the right of self-government. Indeed, one of the most prominent Arab leaders, Emir Faisal, expressed his hopes in a letter he wrote to Felix Frankfurter, a well-known spokesperson for American Jews, in 1919:

> *We will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home....We are working together for a reformed and revised Near East and our two movements complete one another. The Jewish movement is nationalist and not imperialist. Our movement is nationalist and not imperialist. And there is room...for us both. Indeed, I think that neither can be a real success without the other.*

To Think About: The years after World War I were an important historical juncture for relations between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. There was hope for peaceful cooperation, but at the same time the potential for serious conflict also existed. In the next few minutes, develop some proposals that would have made peaceful cooperation possible. Consider the following questions:

1. How should the government of Palestine be organized? Should representation be based on population? Should each community have control over some matters? Which issues should be decided in common?

2. What should be the policy on immigration? Should there be restrictions on the number of immigrants allowed to enter Palestine or should the borders be open?

3. Should the construction of new settlements be controlled? Should certain areas be reserved either for Arabs or Jews, or should property be bought and sold without any restrictions?

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Name: _____

Study Guide -- Part I

1. How did Palestinian and Jewish attitudes toward the British change during the 1930s and 1940s?

2. Why did the 1947 UN plan to divide Palestine fail to keep the peace between Jews and Palestinians?

3. How did changes in the Middle East during the 1950s prompt the United States to play a greater role in the region?

4. Give three reasons why the 1967 war is considered a turning point in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

5. How did the idea of "land for peace" result from the 1967 war?

6. How did the 1973 war set the stage for peace between Israel and Egypt?

7. How did Israel's invasion of Lebanon lead to unexpected consequences for both Israel and the United States?

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Mapping the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Instructions: Refer to Part I of your text, *The Middle East, 1920 to 1985*, and the maps on page 10 to help you answer the following questions.

1. The country east of the Jordan River is today known as _____.

2. According to the British partition plan of 1937, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv would have been under _____ control.

3. According to the United Nations partition plan of 1947, Jerusalem would have been under _____ _____ supervision.

4. After the 1948 war, the West Bank became part of _____ .

5. Jerusalem remained divided between Israel and Jordan from 1948 until _____ .

6. In 1956, Great Britain, France, and Israel launched a military campaign to take control of the Suez Canal away from _____.

7. As a result of the 1967 war, Israel captured land from _____, _____, and _____.

8. Syrian land captured by Israel during the 1967 war is known as the _____ _____.

9. When the Intifada began in 1987, over 1.5 million _____ were living under Israeli military rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

10. In the 1973 war, _____ and _____ attacked Israel to regain territories taken in the 1967 war.

11. During the first stage of the 1973 war, Arab troops succeeded in crossing the _____ Canal and breaking through Israeli defenses.

12. As a result of the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, Israel returned the _____ _____ to Egypt.

13. Israel invaded _____ in 1982 to stop PLO attacks.

14. In 1984, 241 U.S. marines were killed while stationed in the city of _____.

15. In 1985, Israel set up what they considered a six to ten mile _____ _____ in southern Lebanon.

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Study Guide -- Part II

Instructions: Answer the following questions from the perspective of the participants in the current Arab-Israeli negotiations. Make your responses brief but persuasive.

1. What are the most important concerns of the **Israelis** involved in the current peace talks?

2. What are the most important concerns of the **Palestinians** involved in the current peace talks?

3. What are the most important concerns of the **Syrians** involved in the current peace talks?

4. What are the most important concerns of the **Egyptians** involved in the current peace talks?

5. What are the most important concerns of the **Lebanese** involved in the current peace talks?

6. What are the most important concerns of the **Jordanians** involved in the current peace talks?

Name: _____

Study Guide -- Part III

1. Why did the United States develop close ties with Israel?

2. Why did events of the 1970s and 1980s leave many Americans with a negative impression of the Middle East?

3. Why has U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict changed since 1987?

4. How is U.S. policy in the Middle East tied to the issue of foreign aid?

5. In your opinion, are the current peace talks between Arabs and Israelis likely to succeed?

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Presenting Your Option

Day One -- Preparing Your Presentation

Your Assignment: Your group has been called upon to advise the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate. Your assignment is to persuade committee members that your option should be the basis for U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. Your presentation will be judged on how well you present your option.

Developing Your Presentation: Your group should work to make the strongest possible case for your option. Therefore, you should focus on values that will allow you to bring out the most convincing points of your option. Below is a list of six values that many Americans consider important. Your group should select the three or four values that are mostly clearly addressed by your option and then build your presentation around them.

Democracy: Democratic values rest on the belief that government should serve the people and that everyone should be equal before the law.

Self-Determination: The principle of self-determination holds that a people has the right to control its political destiny. In the Middle East, both Arabs and Jews have based their claims on self-determination.

Stability: A series of wars and the proliferation of dangerous weapons has shown that the Middle East is one of the most unstable regions in the world. The tensions surrounding the Arab-Israeli conflict have been a major cause of the region's instability.

Security: Since World War II, the United States has developed important security interests in the Middle East, especially the guarantee of access to the oil of the region. U.S. military ties to the countries of the region are designed to protect U.S. security interests.

Help at Home: The United States is currently suffering from many problems here at home. The Arab-Israeli conflict means little in the daily lives of most people in the United States.

Human Rights: Many governments abuse the human rights of their citizens by unjustly imprisoning, torturing, and even murdering them. Respect for human rights is a fundamental part of democratic values.

Organizing Your Group: Each member of your group should have a specific role. Begin by deciding who the spokesperson for the group will be. The spokesperson is expected to make a three-to-five minute presentation on your option in Day Two of this activity. Your group will also need someone to look for weaknesses in the positions of the other options. On Day Three, your group will have an opportunity to criticize the positions of the other groups. Other group members should be assigned specific values to analyze. Their ideas should then be woven into the presentation of your group spokesperson.

Days Two and Three -- Making Your Case

On Day Two, your spokesperson will present the case for your option to the Foreign Relations Committee members. Notes can be used, but the spokesperson should speak clearly and convincingly. During the presentations, you should take notes to prepare challenging cross-examination questions. On Day Three, you will have a chance to ask your questions. Also, be ready to defend your option against cross-examination questions from Foreign Relations Committee members and other groups. Any member of your group may respond to these criticisms.

Charting U.S. Foreign Policy

U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Members

Your Role

You are a member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate. Your committee oversees the foreign policy of our country. In the past few years, many of our long-standing assumptions about the world have changed. With these changes have come new efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. In this exercise, you will consider five different approaches to our country's policy toward this complex dispute.

Your Assignment

While the five option groups are organizing their presentations, you should prepare two questions about each of the options. You may develop your questions with another member of the Foreign Relations Committee. Your teacher will collect the questions at the end of the exercise.

Your questions should be challenging and critical. For example, a good question for Option One might be:

> *If the United States adopts Options One, how would our relations with important Arab allies, like Saudi Arabia, be affected?*

After all five option groups have completed their presentations, your teacher will call on committee members to ask questions. The Foreign Relations Committee Member Evaluation Form is designed for you to record your impressions of the option groups. Part I should be filled out as the option groups are making their presentations and engaging in cross-examination. Part II should be completed as homework. After this activity is concluded, you may be called upon to explain your evaluation of the option groups.

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Name: _____

Evaluation Form

U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Members

Part I

What was the most persuasive argument presented in favor of this option?	What was the most persuasive criticism presented against this option?
Option One	*Option One*
Option Two	*Option Two*
Option Three	*Option Three*
Option Four	*Option Four*
Option Five	*Option Five*

Part II

Which group presented its option most effectively? Explain your answer.

Focusing Your Thoughts

Instructions: You have had an opportunity to consider five options on U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. Now it is your turn to look at each of the options from your own perspective. Try each one on for size. Think about how they address your own concerns and hopes. You will find that each has its own risks and tradeoffs, advantages and disadvantages. Your assignment is to create an option that reflects your own beliefs and opinions. You may borrow heavily from one option, or you may combine ideas from two or three options. Or you may take a new approach altogether. There are, of course, no perfect solutions. And there is no right or wrong answer. Instead, you should strive to craft an option that is logical and persuasive.

Ranking the Options: Imagine you are a White House adviser and the President wants your opinion on which option the United States should follow. Rank the options, with "1" being the best option available for our country to follow:

___ **Option 1:** The U.S. Should Actively Support Israel's Annexation of the Territories

___ **Option 2:** The U.S. Should Support the Creation of a Palestinian State and Forge Closer Ties with the Arab World

___ **Option 3:** The U.S. Should Persuade All Parties to Accept an Even-Handed Settlement

___ **Option 4:** The U.S. Should Withdraw from the Region

___ **Option 5:** The U.S. Should Support an International Solution and Direct United Nations Administration of Palestine

Beliefs: Considering the statements below will help you lay the foundation for your own option. Rate each of them according to your personal beliefs.

1 = Strongly Support
2 = Support
3 = Oppose
4 = Strongly Oppose
5 = Undecided

___ The United States needs to be deeply involved in the Middle East.

___ The United States benefits from close ties with Arab countries.

___ The United States should help the United Nations take the leading role in resolving international conflicts.

___ Recent events have reduced the need for U.S. involvement in the Middle East.

___ Israel is our most trustworthy ally in the Middle East.

___ Only the United States has the power to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

___ The greatest threats facing our country are found at home.

___ In conducting foreign policy, the United States should favor other democracies.

___ The Palestinians have a right to self-determination.

___ The United Nations is best equipped to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

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Crafting Student Options

The Arab-Israeli Conflict

1. Which beliefs do you most strongly support?

2. What policies should the United States carry out?

3. How do your policy suggestions put your beliefs into practice?

4. What are the two strongest arguments opposing your option?

   A.

   B.

5. What are the two strongest arguments supporting your option?

   A.

   B.

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Five-Day Lesson Plan

Homework: The night before the unit begins, students should read the Introduction of the background readings (abridged version) to prepare for the Day One activity.

DAY ONE

Introducing the Arab-Israeli conflict

Objective: This one-day discussion activity will introduce some of the key issues underlying the Arab-Israeli conflict.

1. Announce that the class will go back in history to 1920 to examine the Arab-Israeli conflict. Distribute "Arabs and Jews in Palestine -- 1920." After students read the handout, call on them to identify other parts of the world where two peoples have claimed the same land (e.g., native Americans and European settlers in the United States, French and Germans in Alsace-Lorraine, Africans and Afrikaners in South Africa, Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland).

2. Divide the class into groups of four students. Allow the groups ten to fifteen minutes to draw up a compromise proposal that will accommodate both Arabs and Jews. Issues to be addressed are outlined in the handout under "To Think About."

3. Call on spokespersons from each group to present their compromise proposal to the class. Record the most coherent proposals on the chalkboard.

4. After the presentations have been completed, compare the proposals on the chalkboard. How do the proposals attempt to weigh the competing claims to Palestine? How did the rise of nationalism complicate the issue? Why was the period after World War I an important historical juncture for the development of the present Arab-Israeli conflict?

Homework: Students should read Part I and Part II of the background readings (abridged versions) and complete "Mapping the Arab-Israeli Conflict" and "Study Guide -- Part II."

DAY TWO

Viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict from a Middle Eastern perspective

Objective: This one-day discussion activity will help students better understand the perspectives of the participants in the Arab-Israeli peace conference.

1. Ask students to identify recent international events that explain why Israelis and Arabs have agreed to take part in peace talks. How are the talks related to the collapse of the Soviet Union? The Persian Gulf War? The record immigration of Jews from the former Soviet Union? The *intifada?*

2. Write on the chalkboard the names of the six groups (Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, Syrian, Egyptian, and Lebanese) that participated in the first round of the Arab-Israeli peace talks that began in October 1991 in Madrid. Call on students to summarize the viewpoint of each group participating in the peace talks. (Suggest that students refer to their answers to "Study Guide -- Part II.") For example, the Palestinian viewpoint should include an explanation of the historical territorial claims of the Palestinians, the formation of Israel, and Israel's subsequent conflicts with neighboring Arab states, an assessment of the current status of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and a summary of the goals the Palestinians wish to achieve at the peace conference. Write the key points on the chalkboard.

3. After brainstorming the viewpoints of each group, ask students to identify the major areas of disagreement between the Arabs and the Israelis. How do the positions of the Arab delegations differ from one another? Explain that, in fact, the Palestinians and Jordanians were represented by a single delegation in Madrid. What historical factors account for that arrangement? Which issues seem most difficult to resolve?

Homework: Students should read Part III of the background readings (abridged version) and complete "Study Guide -- Part III."

DAY THREE

Advocating the five options: organization and preparation

Objective: This two-day simulation calls on students to advocate one of the five options. Students will come away with a deeper understanding of the range of policy options available to the United States while also exploring the relationship between basic values and foreign policy.

1. Inform students that they will participate in a simulation using the options and the background readings. Explain that each of the five options presents a distinct viewpoint on U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict.

2. Divide the class into five groups of three to four students. Assign an option to each group. The remainder of the class, preferably from four to seven students, will serve as members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate.

3. Distribute "Presenting Your Option" to the five option groups and "Charting U.S. Foreign Policy" to the Foreign Relations Committee members. Inform students that each option group will be called upon on Day Four to present the case for its assigned option to the Foreign Relations Committee. Explain that option groups should follow the instructions in "Presenting Your Option." Note that the option groups should begin by assigning each member a role. While the option groups are preparing for their presentation, members of the Foreign Relations Committee should develop cross-examination questions for Day Four (see "Charting U.S. Foreign Policy").

Homework: Students should complete preparations for the simulation.

DAY FOUR

Advocating the five options: presentation

1. Organize the room so that the five option groups face a row of desks reserved for the Foreign Relations Committee. Explain that the simulation will begin with three-to-five minute presentations by the spokespersons of the option groups. Encourage spokespersons to speak clearly and convincingly.

2. Following the presentations, invite Foreign Relations Committee members to ask cross-examination questions. Make sure that each Foreign Relations Committee member has an opportunity to ask at least one question. The questions should be fairly evenly distributed among all five option groups. If time permits, encourage members of the option groups to challenge the positions of other groups. During cross-examination, allow any option group member to respond. As an alternative approach, permit cross-examination after each option is presented.

3. Instruct Foreign Relations Committee members to fill out the first part of their "Evaluation Form" worksheets during the course of the period. The second part of the worksheet should be completed as homework.

Homework: Students should read each of the five options and complete "Focusing Your Thoughts."

DAY FIVE

Crafting student options

Objective: This one-day exercise will guide students toward clarifying their own beliefs and values as they develop a coherent policy option.

1. Call on members of the Foreign Relations Committee to share their evaluations of the option groups. Which arguments were most convincing? Which values were most appealing? Poll the entire class regarding the six values listed in "Presenting Your Option." Which values do students consider most important?

2. Review the list of beliefs from "Focusing Your Thoughts," calling on students to indicate which beliefs they strongly support. Ask students to explain the relationship between beliefs and policy steps. For example, what policies would be based on a belief that Israel is our most trustworthy ally in the Middle East, or that the United States would benefit from closer relations with Arab countries?

3. Distribute "Crafting Student Options." Students should complete the worksheet in class. (Students may be given the option of working individually or in pairs.)

4. *Extra Challenge:* As homework, instruct students to write a letter based on their own option to a member of Congress, President Bush, presidential candidates, or the editor of a local newspaper. Suggest that students devote the first paragraph of their letter to an analysis of recent events. For example, ask students to consider how their options address recent developments in the Arab-Israeli peace talks, the economic recession at home, the end of the Cold War, and other vital issues. In the second paragraph of their letters, students should present their option in the context of recent events while summarizing the answers to the first two questions of "Crafting Student Options."

Introduction

The Arab-Israeli conflict centers on a small piece of land in the Middle East no larger than the state of New Jersey. This area is referred to either by its Latin name of Palestine, or the ancient Hebrew name of Eretz Israel, or "land of Israel." Both Arabs and Jews have religious ties to this land. However, the current conflict is not primarily a religious dispute. The conflict today is primarily a fight over who will control Palestine and who will call it home.

Three of the world's great religions -- Judaism, Christianity and Islam -- developed in the Middle East. Each of these religions is monotheistic, meaning that followers believe in only one god. Believers in all three religions claim descent from the Hebrew patriarch Abraham and all have special ties to Palestine.

Jewish ties to the land: According to Jewish sacred writings, Palestine was promised to the Jewish people by God in a covenant with Abraham and later with Moses. Jewish kings ruled parts of Palestine until the 6th century B.C. In 63 B.C., the Romans took over the region. After a series of revolts, the Roman emperor expelled many Jews from the area. The Jews forced to live outside of Palestine came to be called Diaspora Jews, or "those in dispersion." In the course of nearly 2,000 years, Diaspora Jews often faced extreme persecution. Nevertheless, many Jews strengthened their commitment to Jewish tradition, and looked forward to the day when God would send a savior to lead them back to Palestine. Their religious and secular lives became so tied together that a communal identity has survived to the present.

Christian ties to the land: Palestine is the "Holy Land" to the world's Christians because it is the birthplace of Jesus, a Jew, and the setting for the story of his life and lessons as recounted in the New Testament of the Bible. Many Arabs today are Christians and trace their origins to the early followers of Christ.

Muslim ties to the land: Muslims believe that God revealed his truths through a series of prophets: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesus, and finally Muhammad, who is the last of the prophets. For Muslims, therefore, some of the scriptural heritage of the Jews and Christians is also theirs. However, Muslims are guided by their own holy scriptures, the Koran. Muslims consider Jerusalem their third holiest city and, therefore, an important pilgrimage site.

Although religion carries great weight in the Middle East, the Arab-Israeli conflict is a struggle over land. For Palestinian Arabs, both Christians and Muslims, ties to the land are based on the fact that for centuries Palestine has been their only home. For Jews, the compelling interest has been to establish a homeland safe from persecution, in the land of their ancestors. The rise of nationalism in the late 19th and 20th centuries sparked the present dispute.

Until about a hundred years ago, most of the world was governed by multinational empires. Empires ruled over people of many "nations," or peoples of common descent, religion, language and culture. The Ottoman Turkish Empire, for example, controlled much of the Middle East, including Palestine. In the 19th century, modern nationalism arose in Europe and spread elsewhere. Believers in nationalism thought that people should not submit to "foreign" rulers.

At the turn of the century, neither Jews nor Palestinian Arabs had a state of their own. Jews in Europe at the time were facing a new wave of persecution. The rise of nationalism spurred many of them to think about the possibility of forming a Jewish state. In order to achieve this, Theodore Herzl, a European Jew, founded the World Zionist Organization in 1897. Arab nationalism also began to emerge at the end of the 19th century.

The nationalist movements of Arabs and Jews met head-to-head in Palestine. By the early 1900s, Zionists had focused on Palestine in their efforts to establish a Jewish state. In 1914, there were 85,000 Jews in the area, most of them recent immigrants from Europe. Meanwhile, nationalism was growing stronger among the 550,000 Palestinian Arabs.

World War I and British interests in Palestine further complicated the situation. At war with the Ottoman Turks, the British promised the Arabs independence if they revolted against the Turks. At the same time, Great Britain promised Zionists that a national home for the Jews would be created in Palestine. After the war, the League of Nations granted Great Britain administrative control over Palestine and other areas of the Middle East. Within the territory of Palestine, both Jews and Arabs expected the British to keep their word.

Part I: The Middle East, 1920 to 1985

By 1920, there were already several changes under way in the region that made peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Jews in Palestine seem impossible.

According to the promises they had made during World War I, the British were to promote the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" without infringing on the rights of the local Arab population. Zionists and Arab nationalists interpreted this differently. The Zionists expected the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, and pressed the British to allow more Jews to immigrate. Arab nationalists, on the other hand, believed that they would be granted independence and wanted restrictions on Jewish immigration in order to protect their majority.

When Adolf Hitler took power in Germany in 1933, the immigration rate of Jews to Palestine shot up. The Arab leadership in Palestine did not believe that the British were doing enough to slow down Jewish immigration. In 1936, Arabs launched a general strike to protest British policy. They also boycotted Jewish businesses and began attacks against Jews and Jewish settlements, as well as British forces. This strike was the beginning of three years of intense violence that came to be known as the Arab Revolt.

The Arab Revolt convinced the British that Palestine should be partitioned into Jewish and Arab zones (see map 1). The Arabs, however, rejected the British partition plan of 1937 and continued their uprising until 1939. World War II led to more changes in the British position. At first, the British tried to win Arab support by restricting Jewish immigration. By 1945, however, evidence that six million Jews had been murdered under the Nazi regime prompted an outpouring of international sympathy for the Jews. Many of the Jews who survived the Nazi death camps emigrated to Palestine after the war, swelling the Jewish population to 600,000 and sparking Zionist opposition to British rule. The Zionists objected to restrictions on Jewish immigration and demanded that the British leave Palestine. The Arab population at this time was approximately 1,256,000.

Facing resentment from both Arabs and Jews, the British turned responsibility for Palestine over to the newly formed United Nations (UN) in May 1948. Like the British, the UN proposed a partition plan for Palestine. Although Zionists accepted the 1947 UN plan, Arabs did not (see map 2). Violence erupted even before the exit of the British in May 1948. Seventy percent of the Arab population (more than half a million people) fled the Jewish zone, many fearing attack from Zionist forces.

When the British left Palestine, Zionists declared their zone the independent state of Israel and were granted diplomatic recognition by the United States and the Soviet Union. The Arab states, however, refused to recognize Israel. On the contrary, forces from Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq invaded the new state.

The 1948 war ended after a few months with a UN-negotiated cease fire. Israeli forces had not only held off the Arab attack, but had advanced into the Arab zone. No peace treaty was signed by Israel and its Arab neighbors. Instead, the 1948 cease fire lines came to serve as the de facto borders of the region. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs were left as refugees. The western bank of the Jordan River (present-day West Bank) fell under the control of Jordan, while the Gaza Strip was attached to Egypt (see map 3). Jerusalem was divided in two. Although the creation of Israel marked the realization of the Zionist dream, it was at the expense of the Palestinian population who lost their homeland. With this loss, the stage for future conflict between Arabs and Jews was set.

The 1950s brought a major shift in U.S. policy toward the Middle East. Containing communism emerged as the top U.S. policy priority in light of the intensifying Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. Americans were particularly concerned that the Soviets would extend their influence to oil-rich countries of the Middle East. After 1955, the United States supported countries that pledged to join in the struggle against Soviet communism. Israel, Iran, and Saudi Arabia became important U.S. allies in the region. Meanwhile, the Soviets offered military aid to Egypt, Syria, and other Arab countries.

At the same time, the influence of the European powers was in decline. In 1956, Great Britain and France reacted angrily when Egyptian leader Gamal Abd al-Nasser declared that the Suez Canal was Egyptian property. With Israel's help, the British and French

carried out a military operation to retake the canal and restore British control. The United States and the Soviet Union, however, condemned the plan and pressured the three armies to withdraw from Egypt.

In 1967, Egyptian-Israeli tensions sparked a broader war. Nasser demanded that a UN peacekeeping force serving as a buffer between Egypt and Israel be removed from the Sinai Peninsula, and he cut off the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping. Feeling threatened by Egypt and other Arab countries, Israel launched a surprise attack and crippled the air forces of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Within six days, Israeli forces captured the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights, as well as East Jerusalem (see map 4). The West Bank and Gaza Strip became known as the occupied territories, and Palestinians living there came under Israeli military rule, a state of affairs that continues today.

After the 1967 Six-Day War, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 242, which called on the Arabs to stop all threats and acts of force against Israel, and for the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict." This is the origin of the now familiar "land for peace" formula. In addition to territorial changes, the 1967 war had other implications. U.S. leaders increased military aid to Israel after the war and supported Israel's decision to hold onto the captured territories until the Arab states made peace. The war also resulted in the emergence of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as an independent voice for the Palestinian cause. After 1967, militants under the leadership of Yasser Arafat took control of the PLO. During the 1970s, guerrilla attacks increasingly became a tool used to draw attention to the Palestinian cause.

The humiliating defeat of the Arab armies in the 1967 war planted the seeds for the next round of fighting in the Middle East. In 1973, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel in an attempt to retake the Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights. The effort ultimately failed, but the Arab armies initially broke through Israeli defenses and, in general, fought more effectively than in 1967. The 1973 war broke the diplomatic deadlock and, following this, Anwar Sadat, Egypt's new leader, pursued peace talks with the Israelis.

In 1977, Sadat took a dramatic step toward peace: he traveled to Jerusalem and addressed Israel's parliament. His speech, which was a direct appeal to end the conflict, made in the capital city of the enemy, was the first and only speech of its kind in the Middle East. This peace effort, however, did not move very far at first. Earlier that same year, Israel had elected a right-wing government led by the Likud party of Menachem Begin. Begin had run on a platform of never trading land for peace. The Begin government launched a controversial policy of building Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

In 1978, U.S. President Jimmy Carter stepped in to mediate between the Egyptians and the Israelis. He brought Sadat and Begin to the presidential retreat, Camp David. They persevered until a peace treaty was signed. What became known as the Camp David accords called on Israel to return the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in exchange for a demilitarized border and official recognition from Egypt. Although the agreement represented the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab state, tensions remained high in the Middle East. As a result of the treaty, all but two Arab countries cut off relations with Egypt. Sadat himself was assassinated by religious fundamentalists in 1981. Moreover, Israel showed little interest in pursuing the second part of the Camp David accords, which pointed the way to greater Palestinian autonomy.

The continuing conflict over the Palestinian question led Israel to invade Lebanon in 1982. The invasion was aimed at the PLO's main political and military bases and succeeded in driving the 12,000 PLO fighters out of the country, but at great cost in human life to both sides. The invasion also led to U.S. involvement in Lebanon. In accord with a multinational peacekeeping effort, U.S. marines were sent in 1982 to Beirut, the Lebanese capital. The United States, however, became caught up in the Lebanese civil war. Religious fundamentalists were responsible for a suicide car bomb attack in 1983 which killed 241 marines.

In Israel, the Lebanese invasion greatly sharpened political divisions within the society. The lack of consensus showed up in the 1984 elections, when the right-wing Likud party and the more moderate Labor party ended up in a virtual tie. The following year, Israel withdrew its troops from almost all of Lebanon. A small force of Israeli troops, however, have remained in Lebanese territory to control a six to ten mile "security zone" along Israel's northern border (see map 4).

Part II: 1991, a Crossroads in the Middle East?

The peace talks that began in Madrid on October 30, 1991, have brought out the fundamental concerns of each participating delegation. These issues must be understood and addressed if peace is to be achieved in the Middle East.

Israel: Israel's primary concern has been security. By occupying the territories of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and later the security zone in southern Lebanon, Israel has created buffer zones between itself and its Arab neighbors. Today, however, Israelis are divided over whether security can best be achieved by trading land for peace or by incorporating the occupied territories into the state of Israel. Giving up the territories would mean sacrificing Israel's buffer, though many believe it could end the fighting with the Palestinians.

Palestinian Arabs: Palestinian attitudes have been shaped by nearly 45 years of conflict with Israel. The 1948 war forced more than half a million Palestinians to leave their homes. Half a million more were displaced in the 1967 war. Many of these refugees still live in camps in the occupied territories and in neighboring Arab countries. Traditionally, they have supported the militant policies of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). In recent years the PLO has concentrated its efforts on creating a Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. More than one third of the Palestinians currently living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip live in refugee camps, while the rest live in their own homes. Since the 1967 war, Israel has gradually merged the occupied territories' economy and utilities into its own. Palestinians live under Israeli military rule and are subject to frequent human rights violations. The more than 1.5 million Palestinians now in the occupied territories want their independence from Israel. They are particularly concerned about the construction of new Jewish settlements near their homes as this could prevent the creation of their own state.

Elsewhere in the Arab world: Many Arab states are motivated by concerns about their own survival. Not all Middle Eastern states are wealthy oil producers. In fact, several states (such as Jordan, Egypt and Syria) are poor. During the Cold War, these countries and others turned to the United States and the Soviet Union for financial and military support. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the changes caused by the Gulf War, Arab countries must adjust to a new set of realities in international politics.

Syria was for decades the largest Soviet client state in the region. The Gulf War against Iraq brought about the unlikely alliance between Syria and the United States. Syria is also participating in the peace talks despite years of maintaining a hard-line position against negotiations with Israel. Syrian President Hafez al-Assad has long demanded that Israel return the Golan Heights. He hopes that participation in the peace talks will gain Syria economic aid from the U.S. and strengthen Syria's dominating position in Lebanon.

Egypt has enjoyed close relations with the United States, particularly since the Camp David accords in 1978. Egypt's foreign policy, however, left it isolated within the Arab world until recently. Egypt now wants to restore its position of leadership in the Arab world. At the same time, Egypt remains economically weak and needs to safeguard the more than $2 billion in annual aid it receives from the United States.

Lebanon has been struggling since 1975 with a civil war. Beirut, once regarded as one of the most beautiful cities on the Mediterranean, is largely in ruins, and its name is associated with terrorism and hostage taking. Recently, the Lebanese government signed an agreement with Syria which would allow Lebanon to eventually govern itself while largely relinquishing control of its foreign policy to Syria. Israeli forces stationed in southern Lebanon are the last foreign troops in the country. The Lebanese want to rebuild their country without the presence of these troops.

Jordan has been in an unofficial state of peace with Israel since the early 1970s. But Jordan still plays a key part in the Arab-Israeli conflict because over two-thirds of the country's population is Palestinian. Jordan's King Hussein, who is not a Palestinian, is eager for peace in the region. With Israel to his west and Iraq to his east, he recognizes that Jordan is in a precarious position. The 1948 and 1967 wars, as well as the Gulf War, have left Jordan struggling to absorb hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees. King Hussein fears that further turmoil in the region could bring another wave of refugees into Jordan and eventually topple his government.

Part III: U.S. Thinking and the Politics of Peace

It was a long, difficult road to the peace conference in Madrid, which began the latest round of talks on the future of the Middle East in October 1991. To get the parties to the negotiating table, the United States had to play a high stakes diplomatic game. Now that they are under way, the peace talks are bound to have a major impact on the future of U.S. involvement in the Middle East. Just as important in shaping the U.S. role, however, will be the attitudes of the American public regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict.

For decades, U.S. thinking about the Middle East was dominated by the Cold War against the Soviet Union. The cooperation of Israel's intelligence network made Israel a key strategic asset in the struggle against communism. At the same time, U.S.-Israeli ties were strengthened by American respect for Israel's western-style political system and a sense of moral obligation to help the Jews after the Nazi Holocaust.

The Cold War also led the United States to maintain close relations with Saudi Arabia and Iran to counter Soviet influence. The United States, however, remained consistently opposed to developing ties with Israel's neighbors if they openly threatened Israel's security. Americans were especially suspicious of the Arab states that were in the Soviet camp. Many Americans held the Soviets and Arabs responsible for the escalation in terrorism that took place during the 1970s and 1980s. The most dramatic incidents -- including the attack on the U.S. marine barracks in Beirut in 1983 and the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988 -- left a deep impression on the American public. In addition, U.S. concern over oil supplies has colored American perceptions of the Arab world. In 1973, Arab states imposed an embargo against the United States in retaliation for U.S. arms shipments to Israel during the 1973 war. As a result, oil prices quadrupled and Americans were faced with long lines at gas stations.

Since 1987, however, U.S. policy and attitudes toward the Arab-Israeli conflict have changed considerably. Part of the impetus came from the Palestinian *intifada*. In 1987, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip began battling Israeli soldiers in the occupied territories using only rocks and sticks, creating the image of a struggle between David and Goliath. The Israeli response was harsh. Palestinians were jailed without trial and their homes destroyed. Nearly one thousand have been killed by Israeli troops.

Although the *intifada* changed perceptions, the end of the Cold War had a greater impact on U.S. policy. The collapse of the Soviet Union cut off a key source of support for Syria and the PLO. Many in the United States have begun to question Israel's strategic importance in light of the new situation. Finally, the Gulf War altered U.S. relations with the Arab world. Not only did Egypt, Saudi Arabia and even Syria join the United States to defeat Iraq's Saddam Hussein, but Saudi Arabia also pledged to make up for any shortfall in oil. In brief, the Gulf War marked the first time that Arab states were strategically more important than Israel to the U.S.

While assembling the coalition against Iraq, President Bush promised that the United States would turn its attention to achieving long-term peace in the region following the Gulf War. After months of negotiating, Secretary of State James Baker succeeded in convincing Israel and its Arab neighbors to sit down together for the first time in peace talks.

The peace talks mean that the United States is facing some difficult decisions. On the U.S.-Israeli agenda, one of the most important issues is Israel's request for $10 billion in loan guarantees for new construction, partly to house Russian and Ethiopian immigrants. Israel needs the United States to vouch for it in order to get a loan of this size. In the past, the United States has provided such guarantees, but the peace talks have added a complicating factor. President Bush has insisted that Israel halt new construction in the occupied territories, while Israel has refused to accept limitations on its construction plans. Meanwhile, some Palestinians have warned that the peace talks could collapse if Israel receives the loan guarantees. As 1992 began, U.S. and Israeli officials were still debating this issue.

The United States also faces key questions about its relationship with the Arab world. The biggest decisions will affect two of the most important U.S. allies in the Gulf War, Egypt and Syria. U.S.-Egyptian relations have been fairly good over the past fifteen years. Since the Gulf War, the United States has written off almost $7 billion in debts owed by Egypt while continuing to provide more than $2 billion in annual aid. The United States also appears to be moving toward a new relationship with Syria, despite Syria's past ties with the Soviet Union, human rights abuses and support for terrorism.

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IT'S TIME TO ENSURE ISRAEL'S LONG-RANGE SECURITY
MUBARAK
AND TIME TO STOP OUR WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS AND GIVE THE PALESTINIANS A HOMELAND
SHAMIR
AND END THE INTIFADA AND BEGIN AN ERA OF TRUE ARAB-ISRAELI PEACE.
ARAFAT
AND ESTABLISH A STANDARD OF DEMOCRACY THROUGHOUT THE REGION.
ASSAD
I'D SAY WE'RE MAKING REAL PROGRESS HERE.
BUSH
I'D SAY THIS IS ONLY A CARTOON.
MODERATOR

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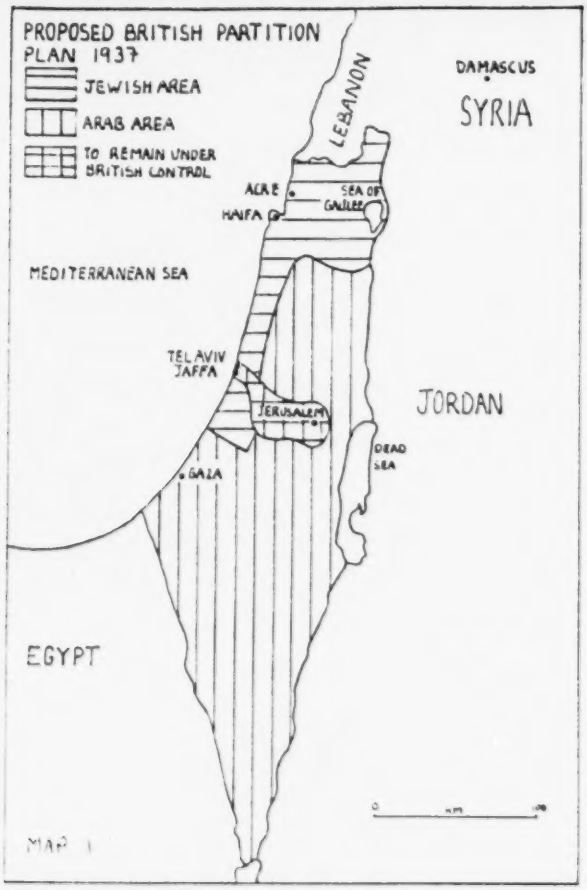

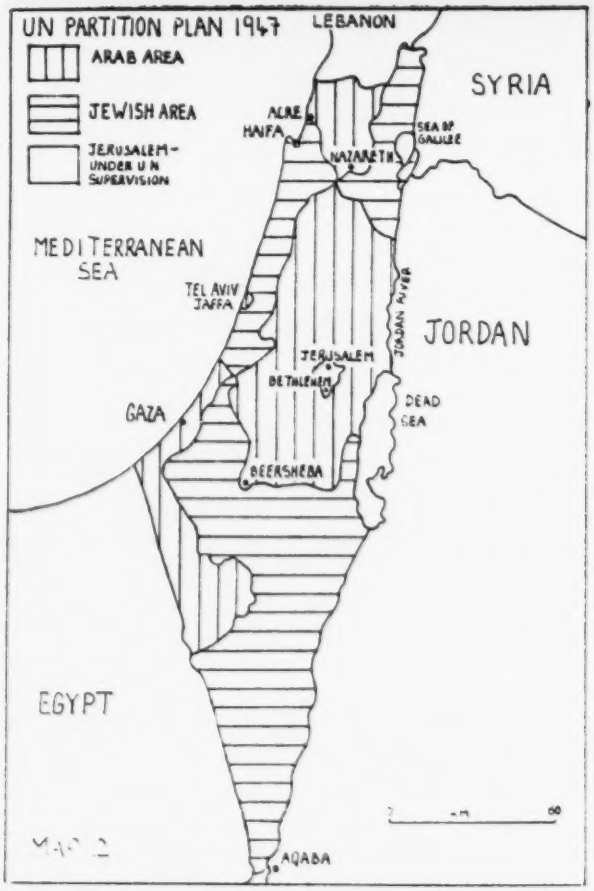

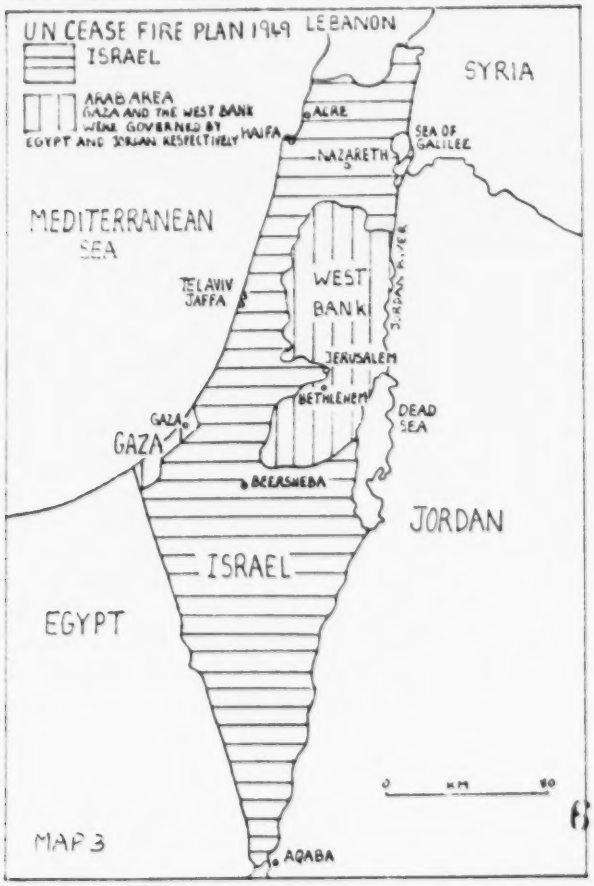

Data compiled from: Smith, Charles. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988; Bickerton, I. and Pearson, M. *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History.* Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1986; *Carta's Historical Map of Israel.* Jerusalem, 1977.

FOLLOW-UP FORM: Please take a few moments to report on your use of this curriculum unit.

THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT: LOOKING FOR A LASTING PEACE

Alternatives for Public Debate and Policy Development

Date(s) used: Course in which you used it:

Grade and level of students:

Number of Students:

Did you use the lesson plans as they appear in the material or did you alter them? If so, how? What worked and what was less than perfect?

Were your students able to "try on" other perspectives?

Did your students find any of the Options especially appealing or unappealing? Why?

One of the goals of this unit is to encourage students to become more attentive to public policy issues. Do you have any evidence that this happened?

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